



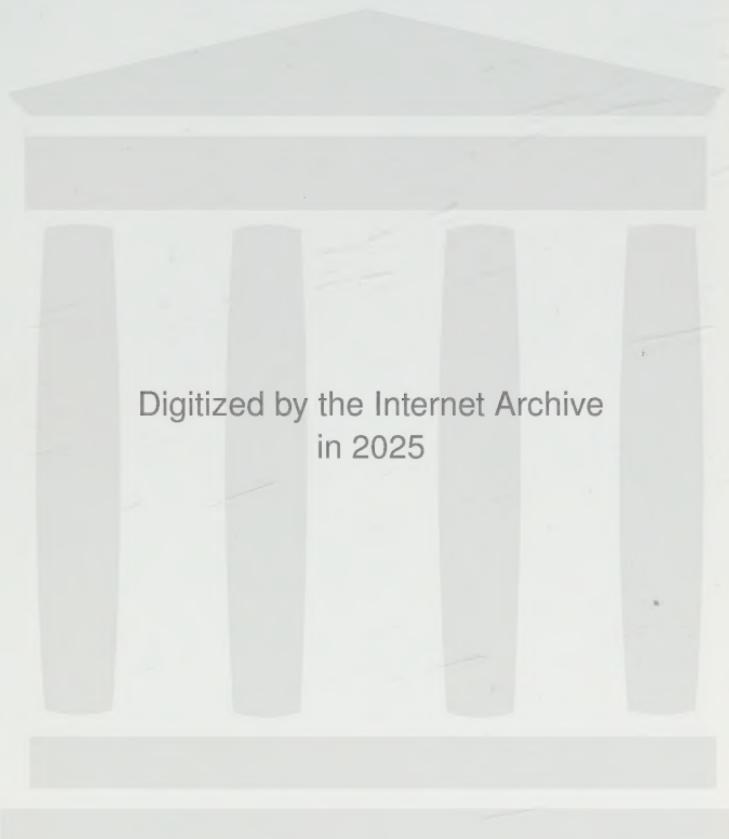
CHARLES S. HARPER.

**THE MANCHESTER AND
GLASGOW ROAD**

WORKS BY CHARLES G. HARPER

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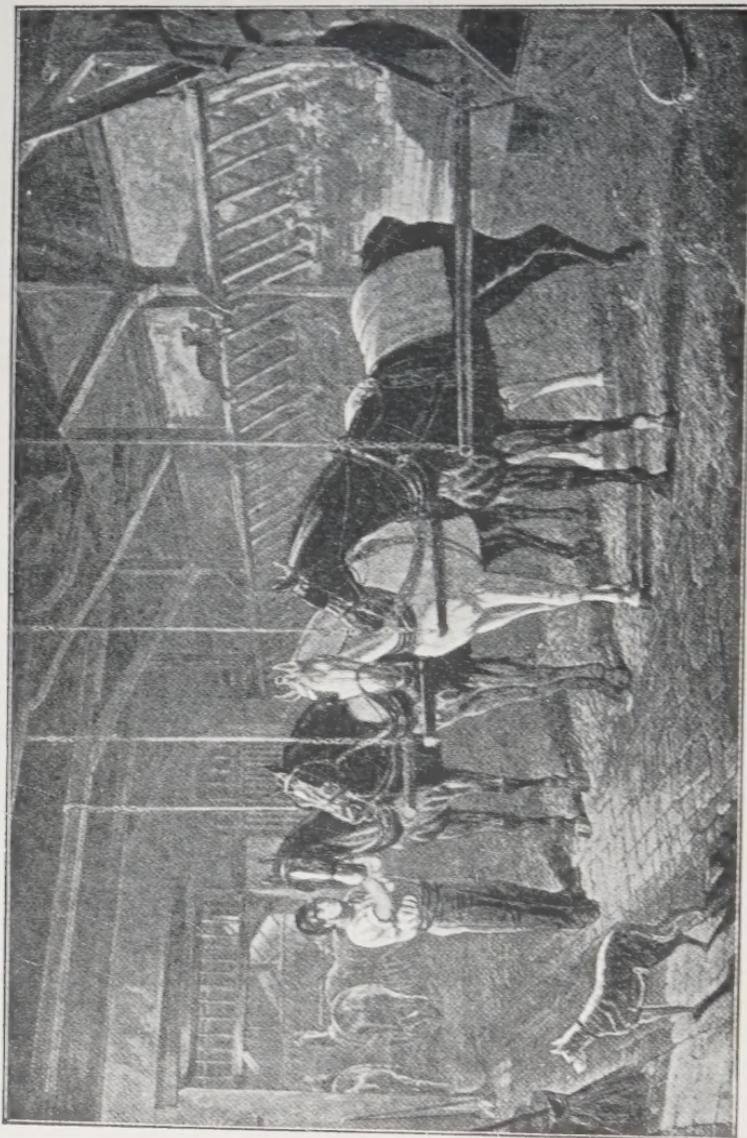
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[By J. Herring, 1844.]

THE MAIL CHANGE.



THE
MANCHESTER
AND
GLASGOW ROAD

THIS WAY TO GRETNA GREEN

By CHARLES G. HARPER

*ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR, AND FROM
OLD-TIME PRINTS AND PICTURES*

Vol. I.—LONDON TO MANCHESTER



LONDON
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1907

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PREFACE



*“Onward and onward the highway runs to the distant city,
 impatiently bearing
 Tidings of human joy and disaster, of love and of hate, of doing
 and daring.”*

THE GOLDEN LEGEND.

THOSE lines, instinct with the dramatic possibilities of the road in far-off days, call to mind the old engravings and wood-cuts of the Durer school, in whose back-grounds, on the Hill Terrible, sits the City Beautiful, reached along a delectable road that wanders, now across open heaths and then disappears in the welcome shade of hoary woods; reappearing to reach its goal beside mountain streams and torrents, whose boulderous course it spans by high-arched bridges. Down such roads as these, in woodcuts such as those, go horsed and armed knights, very plump and steely, ladies fair on their palfreys, with high-horned head-

dresses ; pages, men-at-arms, peasants, and all the mediæval traffic of the highways ; while the verminous hermit in his cell by the bridge comes to his door as the wayfarers go by, scratching himself with one hand, and in the other holding a scallop-shell for the alms he, in a pitiful voice and in the name of God and all the saints, implores.

Those lines, in that modern versification of the terrible old legend by Jacobus de Voragine, bring all these things vividly before the imagination. You may almost scent the hawthorn blossom on the wayside hedges, can all but feel the soft breath of the wind, or the heat o' the sun, and can even smell the hermit, rich in pietistic dirt. Joy and disaster, love and hate, doing and daring, all had their place on the highway in those times : Romance and the Road were terms convertible.

Now all those things are as tales that are told ; but for centuries the Road retained that old distinction : the mediæval company had passed away : the knights and the ladies to their altar-tombs in the old country churches, the rest none knows whither ; but after then came later generations, all travelling, living, hating, and loving along the highways, and so they continued to do, through the coaching era and until railways for a

long series of years rendered the Road an obsolete institution.

When did the immemorial co-partnership of Romance and the Road begin to be dissolved? Let us consider. The first beginnings are found in the introduction of telegraphic signalling, when signal-stations were erected on the hills, and messages were passed on from one to another by means of revolving shutters or semaphore arms. The system originated about 1795, and came into use along this road in 1803. We read in the “Observer” of that period the startling announcement: “A line of communication, by means of telegraphs, is to be established between London and the north, by which intelligence will be conveyed in six hours at the distance of 400 miles.” Here, then, we find the parting of the ways! Instead of the horsed messenger, performing that distance in, let us say, forty-five hours, the telegraphists sent messages through in a fraction of that time, providing conditions were favourable. A very serious drawback to the system was that in dull or stormy weather it was unworkable.

What the mechanical telegraph began the railways and the electric telegraph completed, and the roads—save for the cycles and the motor-cars from whose presence Romance flies abashed—

have lost their intimate touch with life. They are largely removed from the sordid instant, and that is why we love them. Present-day romance will only be found by the next generation when, to adopt an American locution, it has become a “buck number”: for ourselves, we are fain to the poor recourse of listening to the elfin harmonies of the winds in the wayside telegraph-poles, and to deduce romantic messages from those sounds; but alas! so little romantic may they be that the wires are probably flashing market reports to the effect that “grey shirtings are quiet,” or “bacon was steady.” Yet, on the other hand, a police message may be passing, to lead to the arrest of some fugitive: some fraudulent Napoleon of finance or one of the smaller fry: you never know!

In the old days, the criminal, visible to our physical eyes, would be seen, fleeing from justice, and after him, at a decent interval, the officers of the law, tailing away in a long perspective, properly exhausted and furious, their horses foaming and reeking with sweat in most appropriate style. You only see that sort of thing nowadays at Drury Lane or the Adelphi, but they do it very well there, even though the foam and the reek be applied with sponge and soap-suds.

He who would now find sights like these along the roads would need to wait long. The fugitives are as many as ever, but they are in yonder train. The telegraph has already outstripped such an one before he has gone a quarter of his journey, and the police are waiting at the other end, where, quite emotionless and regardless of dramatic necessities, they will presently arrest him.

Long stretches of the roads themselves are altered, with the growth of towns, into something new and strange, and where Terror stalked starkly in days of yore and Romance sped, flaunting, by, smug suburbs spread their vistas of red-brick, paved, and kerbed and lighted, and only the doctor, the collectors of rates and taxes, and the cries of the evening newspaper-boys stir the pulses of the inhabitants. The tragedies that sometimes await the doctor's visits are a poor substitute for the soul-stirring days of old—they are too domestic: and that occasional inability to meet the demands of the tax-gatherer and the rate-collector which even the most respectable suburbs occasionally know is not tragedy in the inspiring sort.

The pilgrim of the roads therefore finds his account in the past; and it is to illustrate the long leagues for him that these pages are wrought

out of long-forgotten things. Such an one, cycling, perchance, down the first few tramway-infested miles and cleansing himself after the almost inevitable muddy skid, may make shift to call a Tapleian philosophy to his aid, and exclaim with gratitude : “After all, it is an improvement upon two hundred years ago. Why, if I had been travelling here THEN, I should probably have been robbed and beaten—perhaps even murdered—by the highwaymen !”

CHARLES G. HARPER.

PETERSHAM, SURREY,
October, 1907.

THE MANCHESTER AND GLASGOW ROAD

LONDON TO MANCHESTER

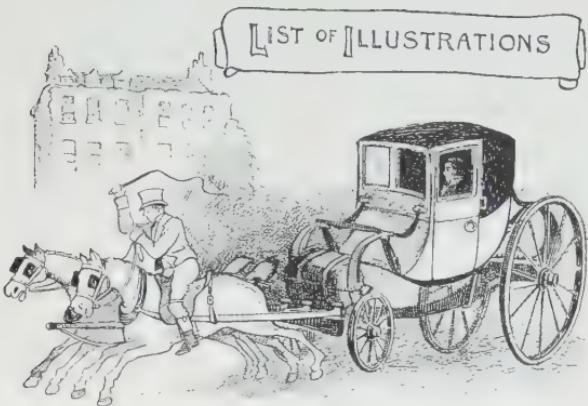
	MILES
London (General Post Office) to	
Islington (the "Angel")	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Highgate Archway	$4\frac{1}{4}$
East End, Finchley	$5\frac{3}{4}$
Brown's Wells, Finchley Common ("Green Man")	7
North Finchley : "Tally-ho Corner"	$7\frac{1}{2}$
Whetstone	$9\frac{1}{4}$
Greenhill Cross	$10\frac{1}{4}$
Barnet	$11\frac{1}{4}$
South Mimms	$14\frac{1}{2}$
Ridge Hill	16
London Colney	$17\frac{1}{2}$
(Cross River Colne.)	
St. Albans ("Peahen")	$20\frac{3}{4}$
Redbourne	25
Friar's Wash	$27\frac{1}{2}$
Markyate	29
Dunstable ("Crown")	$33\frac{1}{2}$
Hockliffe	$37\frac{1}{2}$
Woburn	42
Woburn Sands	$43\frac{3}{4}$
Wavendon	$45\frac{1}{4}$
Broughton	$47\frac{1}{2}$

	MILES
Newport Pagnell	$50\frac{1}{2}$
(Cross River Ouse.)	
Lathbury	$51\frac{1}{4}$
Gayhurst	$53\frac{1}{4}$
Stoke Goldington	55
Eakley Lane	$56\frac{1}{2}$
Horton	59
Piddington	$59\frac{1}{4}$
Hackleton	60
Queen's Cross	64
Northampton (All Saints' Church)	$65\frac{1}{4}$
Kingsthorpe	67
Brixworth	$71\frac{3}{4}$
Lamport	$74\frac{1}{4}$
(Level Crossing, Lamport Station.)	
Maidwell	$75\frac{1}{4}$
Kelmarsh	$76\frac{3}{4}$
Clipston Station	$78\frac{3}{4}$
Oxendon	$79\frac{1}{4}$
(Cross River Welland.)	
Market Harborough	82
(Cross Union Canal.)	
Kibworth	$87\frac{3}{4}$
Great Glen	$90\frac{3}{4}$
Oadby	93
Leicester	$96\frac{3}{4}$
Belgrave	$98\frac{1}{2}$
(Cross River Soar.)	
Mountsorrel	$103\frac{3}{4}$
Quorndon	$105\frac{1}{2}$
Loughborough ("Bull's Head")	$107\frac{3}{4}$
Dishley	$109\frac{3}{4}$

THE MANCHESTER AND GLASGOW ROAD xv

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Hathern	$110\frac{1}{2}$
Kegworth	$113\frac{3}{4}$
Cavendish Bridge	$117\frac{1}{4}$
(Cross River Trent.)	
Shardlow	$117\frac{3}{4}$
Alvaston	$121\frac{3}{4}$
Osmaston	$122\frac{3}{4}$
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Derby (Market Place)	$124\frac{3}{4}$
Mackworth	$127\frac{1}{4}$
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Braillsford	$131\frac{1}{2}$
Ashbourne	$137\frac{3}{4}$
Hanging Bridge	$139\frac{1}{4}$
(Cross River Dove.)	
Swinescote	$140\frac{3}{4}$
Milk Hill Gate	$144\frac{1}{4}$
Waterhouses	145
Winkhill	$146\frac{3}{4}$
Bottom Inn ("Green Man")	148
Bradnop	$150\frac{3}{4}$
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The Manchester and Glasgow Road

I

BEYOND any possible doubt, there is more history—and more varied history—to the mile, along the lengthy road from London to Glasgow than on any other highway in this historic England of ours; with the sole possible exception of the road to Dover. The Great North Road itself is romantically historic, and there are 389 miles of it, but it is not so compact of historic and domestic incident as the Manchester and Glasgow Road—and it is not quite so long. The difference, to be sure, is trifling—merely a matter of $11\frac{1}{4}$ miles—but the long miles to Manchester, and on to Glasgow, are more plentifully set with towns and villages than the Great North Road, which, upon the whole, takes an austere and aloof course; and

there is a wealth of detail on the way that presents at times an embarrassing choice for the historian.

The Manchester and Glasgow Road, according to the best modern authorities, measures from the General Post Office, London, to the Royal Exchange, Glasgow, $400\frac{1}{4}$ miles. Before Telford in 1816, under authority of the Government of that day, took the Carlisle and Glasgow division of it in hand, and eventually shortened it by various engineering expedients, the whole distance was $409\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

There is not the slightest hesitancy to be entertained about the course of this great road. It suited the Post Office in the old mail-coach days to send the mails along the Great North Road to Boroughbridge, and thence across country to Penrith, and so forward to Glasgow, and the contractors made the distance only $397\frac{3}{4}$ miles; but *the route* was that adopted here; through St. Albans, the historic towns of Northampton, Leicester, and Derby, Manchester, Preston, Lancaster, and Carlisle. The mere names of those places conjure up many a scene in the stirring annals of the nation, and suggest crowded incidents in the scarcely less interesting story of industrial progress; while the scenery along the road is in many districts of a high order of beauty, ranging between such extremes as the quiet pastoral country beyond St. Albans, through Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, to the wild moors of Staffordshire, the solemn beauty of Lancaster and

Solway Sands, the stark heights of Shap Fell, and the bleak moors between Moffat and Douglas Mill.

The first stages of the road are common to the Great North Road and the Holyhead Road. At Hadley Green, beyond Barnet, we bid good-bye to the first, and at Hockliffe, $37\frac{1}{2}$ miles from our starting-point, we branch off to the right from the second of those great highways.

II

THROUGH communication between London and Glasgow was undreamed of in the earliest days of coaching; and never, in the very nature of things, was the journey often made without a break, until railway travelling came to entirely alter the complexion of affairs. But Glasgow was early convinced of the necessity for public conveyances between itself and other parts; and at so remote a date as 1678 had succeeded in establishing what would appear to have been a municipally supported coach service between Glasgow and Edinburgh. This coach was maintained by William Hoorn, Hoon, or Hume, "marchand in Edinburge," who received a grant of £22 4s. 5d., and an annual subsidy of £11 2s. 3d., paid two years in advance, and for a term of five-and-a-half years, from the magistrates. The fare was 8s. in summer, and 9s. in winter; the burgesses of Glasgow to have the preference.

It set forth once a week, and by dint of much

labour its six horses dragged it the 44 miles in three days.

How long a time this daring service lasted is not known, but probably not for any extended period. Again, in 1743, the Town Council of Glasgow is found attempting to set up a stage-coach or “*lando*,” to go once a week in winter and twice in summer. Negotiations were opened with one John Walker, and the fare proposed was 10*s.*; but it was not until 1749 that regular communication between Glasgow and Edinburgh was established.

Meanwhile there was nothing in the nature of a coach service between Glasgow and London. To reach the metropolis by public conveyance, you were obliged to go first by this rate-aided conveyance of Mr. William Hume, and then, arrived at Edinburgh, to secure a seat for the tremendous journey southward. It is no mere figure of speech to name that early coach-journey to London “tremendous”; for it took, according to circumstances and the season of the year, from nine to twelve days. The enterprise of Glasgow, it will thus be perceived, was not equal to so great an undertaking.

At a time when the able-bodied—who, after all, were the only people who could endure this kind of thing—were the only people who travelled, except under the extremest pressure of necessity, a horseman would ride the distance in six or seven days, and the postboys who carried the mails before the establishment of mail-coaches commonly

did it in five ; and so, possibly, those enterprising Glasgow town-councilmen considered there was no necessity at that period to support a coach to London.

It was thus comparatively late in the history of coaching that Glasgow and London were connected by a direct coach service, but London and Carlisle Post Coaches were announced, going by Boroughbridge, and starting from December 26th, 1773. They travelled between the “George and Blue Boar,” Holborn, and the “Bush,” Carlisle ; setting out from London on Wednesday evenings, and from Carlisle on Sunday evenings, and performing the journey in three days. They held six inside passengers, and two outsides ; and the fares were, inside, £3 16s., and out, £2 6s. Passengers taken up on the road paid from twopence to threepence per mile. Dogs were strictly forbidden, under a penalty of £5.

It is not until 1788 that we learn of “Plummer’s Glasgow and London Coach,” which travelled the distance in sixty-five hours. In the same year, on July 7th, the first mail-coach arrived at Glasgow from London, after a journey of sixty-six hours ; at a speed averaging about 6 miles an hour. Its route was along the Great North Road, so far as Boroughbridge, whence it continued by Leeming Lane, Catterick, Greta Bridge, and Brough, on to the Manchester and Glasgow Road at Penrith. Arrived at Carlisle, it halted, and a second coach took up the running to Glasgow.

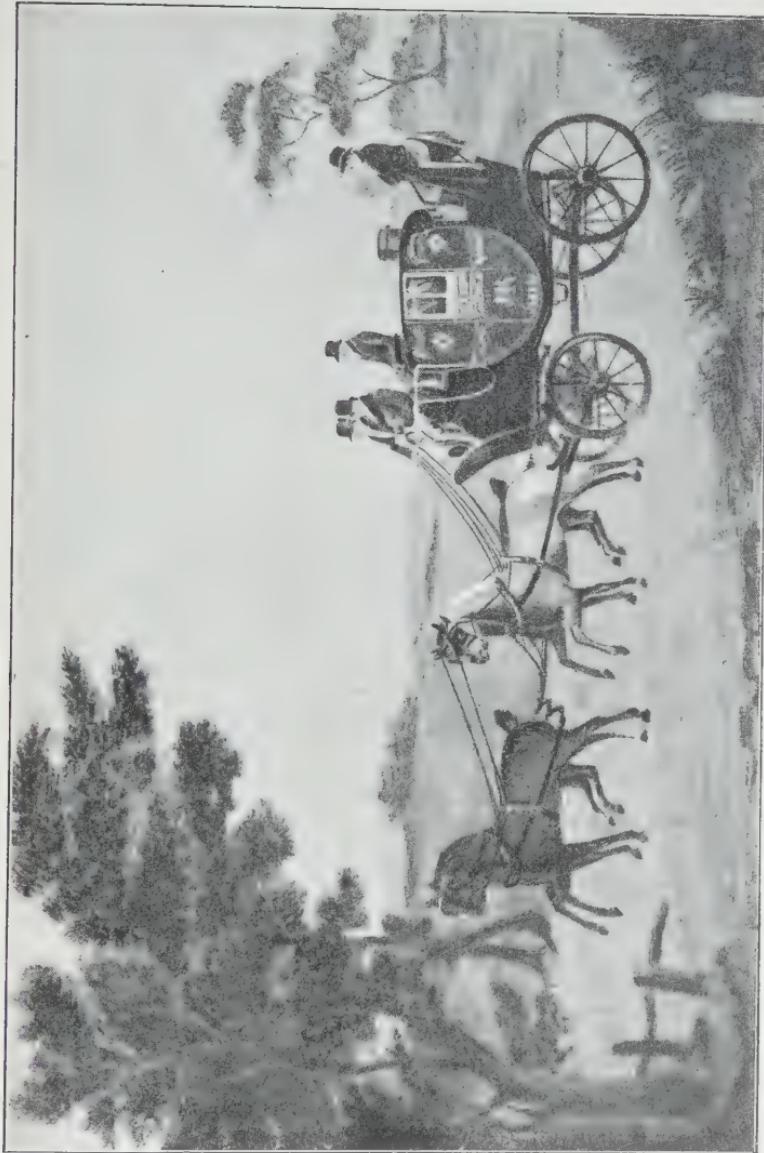
In the era of mails carried on horseback, thus

brought to an end, Glasgow had received and despatched its London post through Edinburgh, at second-hand, as it were, and this newly won independence wrested from the rival city was greeted with becoming enthusiasm, crowds of rejoicing citizens riding out to view the coming of the mail, and to escort it to its destination.

What the mail looked like in the first twelve years or so of its existence we perceive in the illustration after James Pollard, on the opposite page; although we may be quite sure that the coach never in its slowest time progressed in the slow and stately fashion—resembling the mournful deliberation of a funeral—pictured here. This is merely the early Pollard convention, seen in many of his productions.

The first Glasgow mail was by no means direct, and between Boroughbridge and Penrith it passed over wild and difficult country, so that it often did not succeed in keeping time. But, in spite of these difficulties, this route was kept - varied only by occasional divagations taking in Leeds and Ripon—until 1835, and, owing to road improvements between London and Doncaster, a number of accelerations were even possible.

It must have been at an early period of these revisions of the time-table that Professor John Wilson, the athletic “Christopher North,” accomplished the walking exploit credited to him. Disappointed at not securing a place on the up mail from Penrith to Kendal, he gave his coat to the coachman and set off to walk the 26 miles,



THE GLASGOW MAIL, ABOUT 1800.

[After J. Pollard.]

arriving at Kendal some time before the coach. He then walked on to his home at Elleray.

When that fine old sportsman, Colonel Hawker, travelled from London to Glasgow in 1812, the journey occupied close upon fifty-seven hours of continuous unrelaxing effort on the part of the many relays of coachmen, guards, and horses, and of passive fortitude on that of the travellers, who, after all, had the worst of it; for while horses, guards, and coachmen were changed frequently on the way, and passed like fleeting ghosts before their wearied vision, they endured to the bitter end. Well for those who were obliged to go through at one sitting, if it were summer when these three nights and two days of discomfort were being endured; but the stoutest might have quailed before the prospect of such a journey in winter.

In 1821 the coach arrived at Carlisle in what was considered the excellent time of 41 hours 40 minutes from London, a speed, for the 311 miles, of something under $7\frac{3}{4}$ miles an hour. But still it was only at 1.40 on the afternoon of the third day that the mail entered Carlisle; reaching Glasgow at 4.50 the next morning. Time, from London to Glasgow, 56 hours 50 minutes.

By 1825, however, a further acceleration was made. The mail came dashing into Carlisle at 6.7 a.m.; so much as 7 hours 33 minutes earlier. People held up their hands in astonishment, and were of opinion that wonders would never cease: a frame of mind fully shared by the Glasgow

TO THE MANCHESTER AND GLASGOW ROAD

folk, who with satisfaction ill-concealed by natural Scottish calm, saw the mail draw up at the Post Office proportionately early.

They were absolutely correct: wonders did *not* cease; for in 1837 a further saving of 1 hour 50 minutes was effected to Carlisle, the mail-coach arriving at 4.17 a.m. on the second morning from London, time, 32 hours 17 minutes; and drawing up at Glasgow at two o'clock that same afternoon: forty-two hours for the entire journey. This truly astonishing advance upon early performances was only made possible by the long series of improvements effected on the road between Carlisle and Glasgow from 1798 to 1834, by which not only had the gradients and the surface been improved, but newer and shorter stretches of road had been struck out, reducing the actual mileage from 405 miles to 397 miles 6 furlongs.¹

The mail at this final period was not, throughout, one of the crack coaches run under the direction of the Post Office; coming only thirteenth in the list for speed, and showing a performance of an average 9.34 miles per hour as compared with that of the swift Bristol mail, speeding along the road at 10.3, almost a mile an hour quicker. Analysed, however, it discloses for the 95 miles along Telford's splendid Carlisle and Glasgow Road an even slightly higher speed than that of the Bristol mail itself; and there were for many years after the disappearance of the coaches admiring oldsters who recollect with an admira-

¹ *Via* Boroughbridge, Greta Bridge, and Catterick.

tion not unmixed with terror the terrific speed of the up Glasgow mail as it tore down the side of Stanwix Brow, outside Carlisle.

The accompanying official time-bills of the London and Carlisle and the Carlisle and Glasgow mails, as run in 1837, will prove interesting :

GENERAL POST OFFICE.—THE EARL OF LICHFIELD.
HER MAJESTY'S POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Time Bill, London and Carlisle Mail.

Contractors' Names.	Miles and furlongs.	H. M.	Time allowed.	
Sherman . . .	{ 11 2 8 4 5 4 6 3 5 7 7 5	{ 1 18 } 1 28 } 1 20 } 0 56	Despatched from the General Post Office the of 183 , at 8 p.m. Coach No. { With time-sent { piece safe out. No. to .	Arrived at Barnet, 9.18 Hatfield. Arrived at Welwyn, 10.46 Stevenage. Arrived at Baldock, 12.6. Biggleswade. Arrived at Caldecot, 1.2 a.m. Arrived at Eaton Socon, 1.55.
W. & G. Wright .	1 4	0 53		Buckden. Arrived at Alconbury, 2.59. " Stilton, 3.56.
Arnold . . .	{ 5 4 5 1	{ 1 4		Wansford. Arrived at Stamford, 5.28.
Coveney . . .	9 2	0 57		Arrived at Stretton, 6.18. Colsterworth.
T. Whinecup . . .	8 5			Arrived at Grantham, 7.40 by timepiece, by clock.
H. Whinecup .	{ 6 0 8 0 5 1 8 1	{ 1 32 0 50 } 1 22	Coach No. { Delivered gone { the time-forward. { piece safe, No. to .	Arrived at Foston, 8.56.
Burbidge . . .	6 0	0 40		Forty minutes allowed.

Contractors' Names.	Miles and furlongs	Time allowed.	H. M.
Lawton . . . {	8 0 13 1	0 48 1 19	Arrived at Newark, 9.44. Ollerton, 11.3.
Lister . . . {	8 4 8 3	0 49 0 48	," Worksop, 11.52. ," Bagley, 12.40.
Dawson . . . {	4 1	0 23	," Wadsworth, 1.3 p.m.
Dunhill . . . {	4 1	0 23	Arrived at Doncaster, 1.26.
Outhwaite . . . {	14 3 10 0 7 4	1 27 0 59 0 44	," Pontefract, 2.53. ," Aberford, 3.52. ," Wetherby, 4.36.
Cleminshaw . . . {		0 35	By time-piece at Coach No. gone forward. ; by clock ; off at , by time-piece.
Cook . . . {	12 1	1 12	Thirty-five minutes al- lowed.
Couldwell . . . {	12 1	1 12	Arrived at Boroughbridge, 6.23.
Fryer . . . {	11 0	1 6	Arrived at Leeming Lane, 7.35.
Martin . . . {	9 0 4 4	0 54 0 27	Arrived at Catterick Bridge, 8.41.
Fryer . . . {	10 0	1 8	Arrived at Foxhall, 9.35.
Doulim . . . {	9 4	1 5	Arrived at New Inn, Greta Bridge, 10.2.
Teather . . . {	8 0	0 52	Arrived at New Spital, 11.10.
Barton . . . {	13 4	1 21	Arrived at Brough, 12.15.
	9 3	0 55	," Appleby, 1.7 a.m.
	8 6	0 54	Arrived at Penrith, 2.28.
			," Hesketh, 3.23.
			the Post Office, Carlisle, the 183 , of at 4.17 a.m.
			Coach No. arrived.
			By timepiece ; by clock .
	302 7 32 17		

Time Bill, Carlisle and Glasgow Mail.

Contractors' Names.	Miles and furlongs.	Time allowed.	
		H. M.	
Teather, junr. . .	9 6	0 55	Despatched from the Post Office, Carlisle, the 183, at 5. a.m. by timepiece; by clock, London Mail arrived 4.17 a.m.
Burn & Paton . . .	{ 9 2 5 6 5 0	{ 0 53 } 1 1	Manchester Mail arrived 4.48 a.m. Coach No. { With time- sent piece safe, out. } No. ; to .
			Arrived at Gretna, 5.55. Ecclefechan, 6.48. Lockerie.
Wilson . . .	9 3	0 53	Arrived at Dinwoodie Green, 7.49. Arrived at Beattock Bridge Inn, 8.42. Bags dropped for Moffat. Toll Bar. Bags dropped for Leadhills.
	14 0 4 3	{ 1 44	Arrived at Abington, 10.26.
Burn & Paton . . .	9 0	0 52	„ Douglas Mill, 11.18. Bags dropped for Lesmahago.
	6 0 2 0 9 3 11 0	{ 0 46 } 0 53 1 3	Arrived at Knowknack, 12.4. „ Hamilton, 12.57. „ the Post Office, Glasgow, the 183, at 2 p.m. by timepiece; at by clock. Coach { Delivered the No. timepiece safe, arrived } No. , to .
	91 7	9 0	

In their last years, however, the Carlisle and Glasgow and the Carlisle and Edinburgh mails were run to clear 11 miles an hour: the time between

Carlisle and Glasgow being cut down to 8 hours 32 minutes. Cautious folk steered clear of such performances, for accidents were frequent. But it was not speed that caused the dreadful accident to the up Manchester mail from Carlisle, overturned at Penrith on September 25th, 1835. The coach was passing the "Greyhound" inn when the horses, startled by a sudden thunderstorm, upset the coach. A gentleman on the roof was killed, and three other outsiders and the coachman were stunned.

But this was not the full measure of the Glasgow mails. The London and Manchester mail, once proceeding no further than Manchester, was extended by a second coach to Carlisle. This and the regular old Glasgow mail were in later years timed to meet at Penrith at four o'clock in the morning, and went on together to Carlisle. Carlisle was thus a busy centre for the mails, and in addition sent out, besides its local coaches and a mail for Edinburgh, a four-horse mail-coach for Portpatrick, carrying the mails for the north of Ireland. This also went along the main road so far as Gretna, whence it branched for Dumfries; continuing from that town to Portpatrick as a two-horse affair.

The cost of being conveyed by mail-coach from London to Glasgow was enormous. It is possible to voyage in these days to America, a distance of 3,000 miles, for less. In 1812 it cost an inside passenger, all the way to Glasgow, for fare alone, apart from the necessary tips to coachmen and

guards, and exclusive of expenditure for food and drink all those weary hours, no less than £10 8s. : at the rate of about $6\frac{1}{8}d.$ a mile. To-day, the fastest train takes exactly eight hours, and the first-class fare, answering to the mail-coach fare, is £2 18s. ; while one may travel, third class, in greater luxury than the old passengers by mail, for 33s.

III

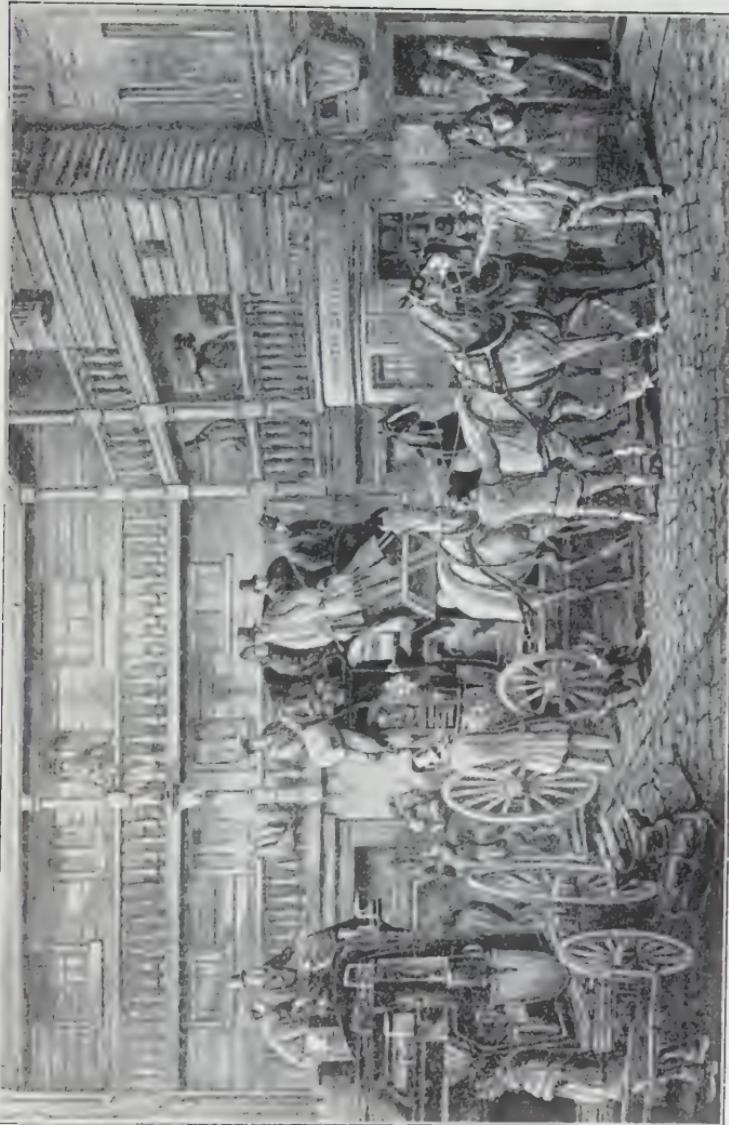
No one ever in coaching days thought it worth while to write the story of the Glasgow mail. The hard, dry facts of it may be sought, and with some diligence found and collated, in Parliamentary Papers, and in the pages of Cary, or in the coaching information common to directories of that age ; but intimate accounts are sought in vain. Travellers who experienced the miseries of long-distance journeys were only too glad to be done with them, and to dismiss the memory of their sufferings. To have passed nearly forty-two hours continuously on the roof of a coach in severe weather, with every hair standing up like a porcupine's quills, and with rain, dew, and hoar-frost as one's dreary portion, forbade all that glamour with which that old era is regarded at this convenient distance of time.

Those who could endure such a journey without a break were few ; and to those few, obliged from any cause to hasten from end to end, the recollection must have seemed a veritable phan-

tasmagoria of dimly shifting scenes and aching, weary limbs.

Thus it is that we obtain only brief and disconnected glimpses of the mail's progress. The most eloquent picture of misery is undoubtedly that presented by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, writing in November 1800, describing a journey from Carlisle to London :

"After passing a sleepless night at Carlisle, I was hurried away next morning without a morsel of breakfast, and grew so very sick and ill in a little while that I had almost fainted twice. When we stopt at Penrith and took up an old gentleman, I then got a large dram of gin, which did me much service ; and we proceeded through snow and ice far and far, and farther than I can tell, till I fell asleep and got a much better night's rest than at that accursed Carlisle. During the night (but Heaven knows where) we picked up two men going to London ; and, lo ! about daylight another qualm seized me. And when we got to Stilton, it blew such a hideous storm, with hail, snow, and wind, that for an hour and twenty minutes the six horses would not move forward, but attempted always to retreat to the stables. Such kicking, such rearing of beasts, such cursing and swearing of men (who had a stronger smack of the big brute in them than even their cattle), I never met with before ; and after every cudgel in the house—yea, even my landlady's private stick wherewith she corrects her spouse—had been bent or broken



THE GLASGOW MAIL LEAVING THE YARD OF THE "BULL AND MOUTH."

[After G. Cooper Henderson.]

over their backs, they got on so slowly that we reached London only at eight in the morning. Here was no peace for the wicked. The ‘Bull and Mouth,’ which is the filthiest place you ever saw, gave me such an aversion to remaining where I was, that I took a place in the heavy coach which went on at one that day, and lay down on a bed till the time for departure. Here my head grew very bad indeed, so that I slept not a wink.”

“Stinking, noisy stye,” he elsewhere calls the “Bull and Mouth,” but we must recollect that Sharpe was very affected, a bundle of fine feelings, and a *poseur*: one, in short, born a hundred years before his time, and by no means one of those robust Englishmen to whom noise and stable-smells were but the ordinary and commonplace incidents of coach-journeys and coaching hostelries.

Nothing, you clearly perceive, could have roused Sharpe to enthusiasm. But there were some wildly enthusiastic people on the road then, and they had often cause, in the stirring news they brought with them, to feel exultation of spirits. For with the mail came news of the Battles of the Nile, of Trafalgar, of Waterloo; and many a wayside park was despoiled of laurel branches to deck out the coach in the emblems of victory. Many a time did the mail enter Glasgow in that fashion: decorated with the bays, a red flag flying from the roof, the guard in his best scarlet coat and gold-laced hat, sounding

his bugle as the horses galloped at a thundering pace along the Gallowgate. Arrived at the foot of Nelson Street, at about seven o'clock in the morning, his duty was, on these historic occasions, to thrice discharge his blunderbuss in the air. Every one then rushed to the "Tontine" coffee-room to learn the news and get the papers: some one with a stentorian voice being generally elected to read the despatches aloud, for the common benefit.

A thrilling story of those old days, when we were generally at war with France, is that of one Archibald Campbell, a Glasgow merchant who had omitted to insure one of his ships, and, in the last few weeks before she fell due, repented of his omission. Alarmed, he sought to effect insurance with a Glasgow office, but found the premium so high that he resolved to insure ship and cargo in London. Accordingly, he wrote to his London broker, instructing him to insure on the best terms possible. The letter was posted and left by the up mail-coach at 2 p.m. At seven o'clock that night he received an express from Greenock, announcing the safe arrival of his ship, and instantly despatched his head clerk in pursuit of the coach, with instructions to overtake it if possible, or, if he could not do so, to proceed to London and deliver a note to the broker, countermanding the insurance.

But, in spite of making every effort to urge on the postillions, the clerk was unable to overtake the mail, with its five hours' start. He

arrived in London shortly after, and proceeded, early in the morning, to the residence of the broker, before the morning delivery, and thus countermanded the order; with the result that an insurance which would have cost £1,500 was saved at the expense of £100.

Such were the incidents that accompanied the mail on its long journey; but they had already faded from general knowledge, and were treasured chiefly in the memories of a few oldsters, when its last days were come, in February 1848. They had been “piping times of peace” ever since the echoes of Waterloo had died away, in 1815; and for two reasons the news of great issues was no longer brought by the mail. Firstly, because great national events had become more rare; and secondly, because when there was especially momentous intelligence, enterprising folks, travelling even faster than the mail-coach, and setting out at any hour they chose, had stolen away the prime position of that old-time national intelligencer. For example, when at length the great Reform Bill passed the House of Lords, after a long period of hazardous political agitation, at 6.35 in the morning of Saturday, April 14th, 1832, a Mr. Young, of *The Sun* newspaper, left the Strand sixty-five minutes later in a post-chaise and four, with copies of *The Sun* he had caused to be printed between 6.30 and 7.30, containing a report of the debate and division, and travelled literally “post-haste” to Glasgow. At 7.30 p.m. on the next day, Sunday, he alighted at the house

of his agent, Thomas Atkinson, Miller Street, Glasgow, having performed the journey in 35 hours 50 minutes: a speed, including stoppages for changing horses, of $11\frac{1}{4}$ miles an hour throughout.

There were, it would appear, others on the road on this occasion, similarly engaged, for John Bright spoke in after years of having travelled up from Manchester to London at the time, by the "Peveril of the Peak," and of having, in common with the other passengers, "observed something coming towards us. We saw horses galloping, and carriages coming at great speed. By-and-by we saw two chaises with four horses, each chaise with two or three men inside. They were throwing out parcels from each window as they went past, galloping as fast as it was possible for horses to travel. These were express chaises, coming from London, bringing the news to all the people of the country—for there were then no telegraphs and no railways—of the glorious triumph of popular principles, even in the House of Lords, for that House had sat all night, and it was not until the morning that the House divided and the second reading of that great measure was carried by a majority of nine votes." Men thought the millennium was come, but events have proved that it had not; and, according to latest advices, it has not been signalled, even yet.

IV

MANCHESTER, less than half the way to Glasgow, was in later years very abundantly supplied with coaches from London ; but London and Manchester were not in direct communication by coach until 1754 ; and had London been left to establish a line of coaches to Manchester, the date would no doubt have been much later. Indeed, it is to be noted that, almost without exception, the earlier coaches between London and the provinces were established by provincials seeking to reach London. The metropolis was always magnificently indifferent ; but when the provincial manufacturing towns began to arise, the manufacturers, seeking business with that greatest of markets, and finding nothing for it but to ride horseback to and from London, speedily set up coach services. Thus it was that the first coach ever to run between Manchester and London was established by an association of Manchester men. This was the " Flying Coach " of 1754, which was announced with the statement that " However incredible it may appear, this coach will actually (barring accidents) arrive in London in four days and a half after leaving Manchester."

Really and truly ! as the children say. Here we smile ; but those eighteenth-century projectors manifestly took things very seriously, as they had every reason to do ; and doubtless considered the establishment of this flier a wonderful achievement.

Six years later, in 1760, Messrs. Handforth, Howe, Glanville & Richardson's coach is found performing the journey in three days "or thereabouts"; and in 1770 the "London Flying Machine," by Samuel Tennant, began to wing its way every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in summer, in two days, from the "Royal Oak," Market Street. It set out in summer at the shocking hour of one o'clock in the morning, but conceded 4 a.m. in the winter months; when, however, it required another whole day for the journey.

The earlier coaches seem to have been discontinued, for Tennant's "Flying Machine" was in 1770 the only one between London and Manchester; but for the less moneyed and more leisured classes whose time was of small value, and expedition was therefore of little moment, there were Matthew Pickford's stage-waggons ("Flying Waggons" he called them), which, generally at a penny a mile, conveyed passengers and goods between London and Manchester in four and a half days. They went from the "Swan," Market Street Lane, on Wednesdays and Saturdays; but had several rivals: notably Bass's waggons, on Fridays, from the "Fountain"; Cooper's, from the "Star," Deansgate, on Wednesdays and Saturdays; Hulse's, from the "Windmill," on the same days; Washington's, from the "Pack Horse," Mill Street Lane, Tuesdays; and Wood's, from the "Coach and Horses," Deansgate, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

In 1776-7, serious competition began for the coaching traffic between London and Manchester, two rival concerns—the “London New and Elegant Diligence” and the “New Diligence”—each setting out from Manchester three times a week and taking only two days to perform the journey. The “New and Elegant” competitor set out from the “Upper Royal Oak” inn, Market Street Lane, and went by Macclesfield and Derby. Its complement was thirteen passengers, who were allowed 14 lb. of luggage each, free; and the fare was £2 6s. or 3d. a mile. Among the proprietors of this coach occurs the name of Pickford.

The “New Diligence” (which appears to have been established before its “New and Elegant” fellow) went by way of Matlock and Derby.

The next great event was the establishment of the Manchester mail, in 1785. It left the yard of the “Swan with Two Necks,” in Lad Lane, every weekday evening at 7.30 p.m., and the General Post Office half an hour later, and came to H. C. Lacy’s “Bridgewater Arms,” Manchester, at 6 p.m. the next day. Time, 22 hours; a speed of close upon $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour. At its best period, from 1825 to the end, in 1837, it accomplished the journey in exactly 19 hours, at the average speed of 9.66 miles per hour.

Meanwhile, during the fifty-two years that witnessed the whole career of the mail-coach, down to its final run, stage-coaching along the road to Manchester was utterly revolutionised. Rivalry

and competition, as fierce as that on any road, brought the coaches to such a degree of perfection that for comfortable travel, as then understood, it was ahead of all other routes ; and to such a turn of speed that it was equal to the best for rapid transit.

During all this period, the districts north of Manchester were more or less beyond the ken of the London stage-coach proprietors, to whom the comparatively lean traffic of the road on to Lancaster, Carlisle, and Glasgow offered no great inducements for through bookings. Moreover, Manchester and Carlisle were themselves great coaching centres, whose coach proprietors were very well able to work by themselves and take such long-distance competition at a disadvantage. From the " Bridgewater Arms," High Street, Manchester, went numbers of branch mails ; from the " Star " inn, Deansgate, and the " Mosley Arms," Market Place, went a long list of stage-coaches to Lancaster, Kendal, Carlisle, and Glasgow, as well as others along the important cross-roads ; while from the " Swan " inn, the " Flying Horse," the " Palace " inn, and the " Talbot," Market Street ; the " Golden Lion " and " Bush," Deansgate ; " Lower Turk's Head," Shude Hill ; " Buck," Hanging Ditch ; " Boar's Head," Hyde's Cross, and others a swarm of short-distance coaches set out.

The chief mail contractor at Manchester in the early days of coaching was Alexander Paterson, who removed from the " Lower Swan " inn,



THE "COURIER," MANCHESTER, CARLISLE, AND GLASGOW COACH.
[After C. B. Newhouse.

Market Street Lane, to the “ Bridgewater Arms ” in 1788. He was succeeded by H. C. Lacy, who in 1827 removed to what had until then been a private mansion at the corner of Market Street and Mosley Street, and opened it as the “ Royal Hotel and New Bridgewater Arms.”

The older inn has long since been converted into warehouses, occupied at the present time by Messrs. Woodhouse, Hambly & Co.

Among the few stage-coaches advertised to run through the whole distance from London to Manchester and Glasgow was the “ Courier,” which was started in later years and ran until the opening of the railway. It set out from the “ Belle Sauvage,” Ludgate Hill, and from the “ Castle and Falcon,” Aldersgate Street, every weekday at 3 p.m., and connected by a branch coach at Carlisle with Edinburgh.

V

STRANGE portents were seen upon the road to Manchester in the early years of last century. About 1824 began the era of the fast day coaches, and fine vehicles, handsome horses, and decent harness were provided for the travelling public, instead of the springless tubs, wretched cattle, and harness composed chiefly of odd pieces of worn leather eked out with string, which made up the uncomfortable old night coaches. It was a new era in more than one sense, for this was

that now historic period when horseless vehicles were first put upon the public roads.

The 'twenties of the nineteenth century were almost as remarkable for those early horseless vehicles, the steam carriages, as the present era is for petrol-driven and electric motor-cars. Railways, too, began early to threaten stage- and mail-coaching; and long, whirling, and involved controversies on road and rail traffic occupied the columns of the press, and overflowed into innumerable pamphlets.

Few people had sufficient imagination to foresee an era of mechanical locomotion; but one pamphleteer, who unfortunately elected to remain anonymous, published in 1824 what modern journalists with an insufficient English vocabulary would doubtless call a *brochure* on the subject. This booklet, entitled *The Fingerpost*, is, according to its title page, "By ? ? ?." Whoever he may have been who thus veiled his identity behind those triple notes of interrogation, he certainly was a seer. He foresaw our own times with limpid vision—and smelt them, too.

He thought it "reasonable to conclude that the nervous man will ere long take his place in a carriage drawn or impelled by a Locomotive Engine with more unconcern and with far better assurance of safety than he now disposes of himself in one drawn by four horses of unequal powers and speed, endued with passions that acknowledge no control but superior force, and each separately, momentarily, liable to all the calamities that flesh

is heir to. Surely an inanimate power, that can be started, stopped, and guided at pleasure by the finger or foot of man, must promise greater personal security to the traveller than a power derivable from animal life."

"I must ask him," he continues, "to indulge his imagination with an excursion some twenty or thirty years forward in the regions of time; when the dark, unsightly, shapeless machine that now offends him, even in idea, shall be metamorphosed into one of exquisite symmetry and beauty, and as superbly emblazoned with heraldic honours as any that are now launched from the floors of Long Acre—a machine that may regale his nostrils with exhalations from some genial produce of the earth whose essence may be extracted at an insignificant cost, and its fragrance left on the breeze for the sensitive traveller's gratification; that, instead of the rumble of coaches, may delight his ear with the concord of sweet sounds."

Wonderful man: penetrating intuition! But barbaric conservatism blocked the way, and not thirty years, but a weary period of seventy-two, intervened between his day and the fulfilment of his dream. In 1896 the Motor Car came, and we have now our fill of "exhalations," whose "fragrance" is "left on the breeze" in the form of stinking petrol and fried lubricating oil; while streets and roads are smothered in dust and, in a "concord of sweet sounds," resound to the crashing of gears and the bellowing of motor-horns, like the bulls of Bashan afflicted with bronchitis.

But in that early experimental period a London and St. Albans Steam Carriage Company (among others) was formed, and made several trips with its uncouth monsters. Proposals were even made to establish a “steam-coach” service to Manchester, the coach to haul behind it a number of goods-waggons; but the turnpike authorities at Dunstable, anxious for the condition of their roads, hearing early of this proposition, were prepared for the unwelcome visitors, and, procuring cartloads of immense stones, strewed the highway with them. They certainly brought the “steam-coach” to a halt, but at the same time nearly wrecked the down Manchester mail; and it was a long while before the Post Office allowed them to forget their excess of zeal.

VI

UP to 1821 there had been comparatively little coaching competition along the Manchester Road. In that year there ran along the Coventry, Atherstone, Lichfield, and Congleton route to Manchester (which is not the Manchester Road as considered in these pages) the “Prince Cobourg” coach, which set out from the “Swan with Two Necks,” and was at Manchester in exactly twenty-six hours; but the “Defiance” was in the first flight upon the route adopted here. It was not very swift, for it set out at half-past two every afternoon from the “Swan with Two Necks,”

Lad Lane, and did not arrive at the "Bridgewater Arms," Manchester, until 5.30 the next afternoon : twenty-seven hours. That was just before the era of the great Chaplin, and at that time the "Swan with Two Necks" was still kept by one Kingsford, while the Coach Office in its yard remained in the hands of William Waterhouse, who had carried on business there as a mail contractor and coach proprietor since 1792, and was well content with the old leisurely ways. Such as it was, the "Defiance" was only equalled in that year by the "Regulator," which, running from the same establishment, was no competitor, having a slightly different route, taking it through Buxton. It also performed the journey in twenty-seven hours. The "Manchester Telegraph" at that time took thirty hours.

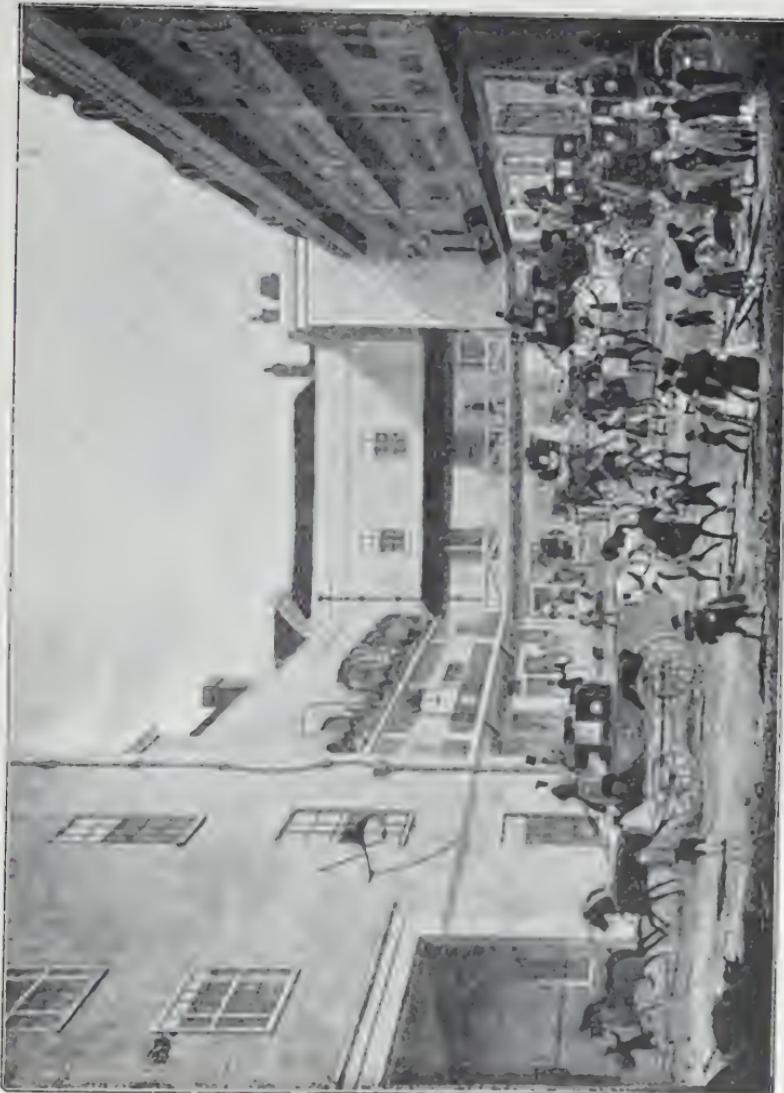
But in 1822, probably nerved to great deeds by the establishment of a smart rival, the "Independent," which worked on alternate days from Nelson's "Bull" inn, Whitechapel, and the "Spread Eagle," Gracechurch Street, and leaving London every evening at 6 p.m. reached Manchester in twenty-four hours, he did manage to expedite the "Defiance" by two hours and a half. In that year it made the journey in twenty-four and half hours. In 1826 it had become the "Royal Defiance," and, starting at 6.30 p.m., was at Manchester in twenty-four hours.

These successive accelerations were probably due to William Chaplin, who seems to have be-

come interested by degrees in the business so long carried on by Waterhouse, and to have finally succeeded him about 1825.

The “*Defiance*” had in its earlier years very little to contend against. In 1821 there was a “*Manchester Telegraph*” from the “*Castle and Falcon*,” Aldersgate Street, also starting at 2.30 p.m., but taking no less than twenty-nine and half hours to perform the journey: a very modest pace of some six miles an hour. But in 1823 a powerful rival appeared in Edward Sherman, who then established himself at the “*Bull and Mouth*,” St. Martin’s-le-Grand, as a coach proprietor. He had come up to London as a boy, from Wantage, Berkshire, with the traditional half-crown in his pocket; and found work in Oxford Market as a boy-porter, earning 8d. a day. Out of this scanty wage he saved a daily 2d. According to some accounts, he found his way on to the Stock Exchange, in some connection with one Levy, a wealthy farmer of the turnpike tolls, who helped to establish him at the “*Bull and Mouth*. ” He was a tall, dark, fine-looking man; one of the very few who at that time wore a moustache, the mark then of the fast, wild young fellow. He married the wealthy widow proprietress of the “*Oxford Arms*,” Warwick Lane. She soon died, and was not long afterwards followed by her sister, who left him her property. He then married his wife’s niece.

Eventually he raised himself to the first rank of coachmasters; almost rivalling the great



MAILS LEAVING THE YARD OF THE "SWAN WITH TWO NECKS," 1834

[After J. Pollard.]

Chaplin himself, and running several coaches in keen competition with him. He rebuilt the "Bull and Mouth," and in his prime owned seven hundred horses. Over fifty mail and stage-coaches, chiefly for the northern and north-western roads, left his capacious yard every twenty-four hours. The great stables were likened to a small town.

He was not a horsey man, but his horses and coaches were of the best. The coaches were easily distinguishable among all others, their lower panels and wheels being painted a light yellow, and the upper quarters black.

The famous "Manchester Telegraph" day coach, established by Sherman in 1833, left the "Bull and Mouth" at 5 a.m. and reached Manchester at half-past eleven o'clock the same night. As competition with Chaplin's "Defiance" grew hotter, its speed was accelerated by a half, and then by one whole hour; when the pace, allowing for twenty minutes at Derby, where "the coach dined," and reckoning the various changes, worked out at just under twelve miles an hour.

To safely negotiate this, in parts, hilly road at so high an average rate of speed, the "Telegraph" coach was especially designed and constructed with flat springs, which gave it a comparatively low centre of gravity.

The strict conduct of coaching business may readily be perceived by a glance at the appended time-sheet carried on every journey:

TIME BILL, "TELEGRAPH" LONDON AND
MANCHESTER COACH, 1833*Down.**Guard.....*Leave the "Bull and Mouth," 5 a.m.
Left the "Peacock," 5.15 a.m.

Proprietors.	Places.	Miles.	Time	Should	Did
			allowed.	arrive.	arrive.
Sherman .	St. Albans	19½	H. M.	H. M.	
Liley .	Redbourn	4½	1 54	7 9	
Fossey .	Hockliffe	12½	0 22	7 31	
	Northampton		1 10	8 41	
	Breakfast		0 20		
Shaw .	Harboro'	47½	4 30	1 31	
	Leicester				
Pettifer .	Business		0 5		
	Loughboro'	26	2 27	4 3	
	Derby				
	Dinner		0 20		
Mason .	Ashbourne	30	2 48	7 11	
Wood .	Waterhouses	7½	0 43	7 54	
Linley .	Bullock				
	Smithy	29½	2 46	10 40	
Wetherald & Co. .	Manchester	9	0 50	11 30	
		186	18 15		

*Guard (Sign your Name).....**Timepiece No.*

OBSERVE.—That a fine of 1s. per minute will be incurred by each proprietor for every minute of time lost over his stage or stages, to one-half of which the coachman and guard will be held equally liable between them, should their employers see sufficient cause for enforcing the same.

Misdating the time-bill, or neglecting to date at all (either with pen and ink or pencil), at any of the above places, the moment he arrives, will subject the guard to a fine of 5s. for each default. The guard is also to leave his time-bill in the office on his arrival at the "Bull and Mouth," or forfeit 5s. for each omission.

Sherman's "Estafette" was a great advance in coaching luxury, and was a product of the keen competition in the last few years of coaching. The



THE "MANCHESTER TELEGRAPH," 1834.

[After Robert Havell.]

interior was lighted with a reflector lamp, illuminating an elegantly engraved ivory tablet, showing a table giving all towns on the route, distances, and intermediate times.

A very prosperous coach in later years, always loading well, was the “Peveril of the Peak,” competing with the “Telegraph” and the “Defiance” by dint of leaving London at a somewhat later hour. Another fast night coach was the “Red Rover,” by Robert Nelson, of the “Belle Sauvage,” Ludgate Hill. It started at 7 p.m. and accomplished the journey, by way of the comparatively level Holyhead Road to Birmingham and Wolverhampton, and thence by Newcastle-under-Lyme and Congleton, in twenty hours. There was no mistaking the “Red Rover,” for not only was the coach itself red, but the guards wore red hats and red coats. Sherman soon bought out Nelson, and took the “Red Rover”; but Nelson immediately put on another along the same route, calling it the “Beehive.” It went to the other extreme, and set out at 8 a.m., arriving at Manchester at 4 o’clock the next morning. It sounded the last note in coaching convenience, for not only was it fitted inside with a reading-lamp, and the inside seats provided with spring cushions, but every seat was numbered in order to avoid disputes.

In 1834, competition between coach proprietors on the chief routes grew so keen that a war of extermination broke out; the stronger men striving to crush the smaller by reducing fares below a

paying level. On this road it became possible for a while to travel at half the former fares, and to journey the 186 miles to Manchester for 40s. inside, and 20s. out ; but cheap travel was dearly bought in the accidents occasioned through this extravagant rivalry. In addition, were the usual and inevitable mischances of the highway. Thus the Manchester "Defiance" was upset in August 1835 at Brailsford, through the horses shying at a white gate, when a Mr. Holbrook was killed ; and the "Peveril of the Peak" was overturned in September 1836, a passenger and the coachman being crushed to death.

Those coach proprietors with the longest purses would, of course, in time have crushed the smaller men in this war of cheap prices ; and already, before the railway came to sweep big men and little into one common limbo, those with slender resources were feeling the pinch of daily expenses, and could sometimes hardly settle their turnpike accounts—especially heavy on this road.

The onerous burden of the tolls payable by stage-coaches can scarcely be realised, save by stating a specific example. The amount incurred on a single journey to Manchester was no less than £5 13s. 5d., and this was by no means exceptional. Of course, the coach did not stop to pay toll at every gate, the practice being to settle monthly. The burden seems a heavy one for coach proprietors, but was, like every other tax, levied in the end upon the consumer, being finally paid by the coach passengers in their fares, cal-

culated on the basis of the coach proprietors' expenses.

At last, in 1837, with the opening of the London and Birmingham Railway to Manchester, this petty warfare was stilled, and the business of the coach proprietors seemed to be ended. In 1836, when the railway had been opened as far as Birmingham, Chaplin and Benjamin Worthy Horne, two of the largest proprietors, had been induced to withdraw from the road, and to throw their interest on the side of the new methods; but Sherman refused to hear anything of the kind. He was the most courageous, not to say the most obstinate, of men; thoroughly British in the characteristics of doggedness and unwillingness to own himself beaten. He did not believe in railways, until the stern fact of his coaches running empty along the road convinced him, at a considerable loss; and when in 1837 temporary trouble arose between the public and the railway, and some were already regretting the old days, he dashed in and re-established his "Red Rover" coach, which lasted a year or more, losing money heavily when the Manchester people and the railway had composed their quarrel.

The character-sketch of Sherman, here begun, may here be fitly concluded. Without doubt a man of strong character, he had many peculiarities, among them a decided taste for extravagance in dress and jewellery, remarkable even at that time, when dress was very exuberant indeed. Instead of sporting a shirt front, his chest displayed an

expanse of black satin, plentifully covered with diamond pins. One day a thief came behind him in the street, reached a hand over his shoulder, and made off with a valuable specimen. Sherman afterwards had them all attached to a chain.

His fighting temper, if it stood him in good stead among his fellow coach proprietors, certainly, as we have seen, involved him in heavy losses in quarrelling with railways, before he found them too strong for him. To lose money was to him an especial grief. The very sight of sovereigns was a solace to him, and he kept a hundred in a tankard, deposited in his safe at the "Bull and Mouth," so that he might always have the pleasure of handling the gold.

He had—according to private information—a number of children "that he ought not to have had," whatever that may mean. His last years were sad, for his relatives exploited his temper and some eccentricities he had developed, and procured his committal, as a lunatic, to Bethlem Hospital, where he died in 1866. There are those yet living who remember him there, and tell how he was put away with little legitimate excuse.

The "Bull and Mouth" was carried on by his executor, E. Sanderson, until 1869, when it was purchased by the late Quartermaine East, and re-named the "Queen's Hotel."

Nowadays, the most ruinously low coach fares of that competitive time before railways are made to look absurdly high by even the ordinary

third-class railway fare, 15s. $5\frac{1}{2}$ d., to Manchester : and excursions are frequently run at the price of a few shillings.

VII

WE cannot well leave the subject of coaching without some fleeting reminiscences of the coachmen and guards who worked up and down the road. Not all of them have earned a measure of fame. They formed, indeed, a very considerable body of men, and there were some generations of them ; beginning with the poor old red-nosed and many-caped Tobys who, wrapped up in many wrappings and swathed about the feet and legs with hay-and-straw bands, sat on the box like partly animated mummies ; and ending with coachmen who were in many attributes considered gentlemen. A love of strong spirits was common to the earlier and later generations, but those of the earlier were merely “drivers,” if you please, and the later were “coachmen.” The old Tobys drove chiefly through the night, and in times when speed did not exist and skill was not essential : the rather flashy “swell” coachmen of a later era cut a dash in the daytime, with a cigar between their teeth, and had extraordinary skill with the reins. These were the two chief classes, subdivided again and again by individual peculiarities ; and then there were the guards.

Coaching experts were never tired of sounding the praises or noting the peculiarities of the fine

coachmen on this road. Bob Snow, of the "Telegraph," was, according to "Nimrod," who took his position as a coaching critic very seriously indeed, "all right—a pink in his way, and as well dressed for the road as a gentleman ought to be for Almack's." Great, too, was his admiration for Harry Douglas, another coachman on the "Telegraph." He was "about the size of two ordinary men." Not only could he gallop a coach without it swinging, but he could drink as much as would scald a porker. As Dibdin sang of Tom Bowling, "his virtues were so rare." He was, moreover, "a great favourite with the Manchester gentlemen, and an artist of the first order. His right arm"—for taking it out of the horses in tender places with the whip—"was terrible. Jovial, singing many excellent songs," he appears to have been a prominent figure.

But Joe Wall was the unapproachable, the unsurpassed, at whose magnificence the road gaped with astonishment. In the height of his fame he drove the "Telegraph" the thirty-seven miles between London and Hockliffe. He was "a tremendous swell," keeping one or two hunters at that place, and thus occupying the hours he passed there, waiting to take his seat on the up coach. On one occasion he had a fall in the hunting field, preventing him taking the "Telegraph" up to town that night. Fortunately an able and experienced amateur hand was on the coach, and took his place. None other less accomplished could have been

trusted with so fast a coach, going at night through the crowded approach to town.

Meecher, on the other hand, although a competent whip on the "Telegraph," was a satirical and gloomy person: a kind of masculine Gummidge. He was a reduced gentleman, and as such found the world out of joint. In revenge, he "took it out of" the commercials travelling on the coach, and lost much by refusing to allow any one who was not also a gentleman to treat him. Exactly how he arrived at his estimate of gentility or the want of it does not appear.

His humour was certainly of the sardonic kind, as appears by a story told of him. "Pity those women have nothing to do," exclaimed a passenger on the box-seat, eyeing a gossiping group in the road.

"I'll give them something," said the saturnine Meecher; and, pulling up to them, he asked in his gloomiest tones if any of them missed any of their children; "for," said he, "I've just run over and killed one, down the road." They all flew off, agonised, and Meecher grinned.

He came at last, in the general ruin of coaching, to drive a one-horse railway omnibus; but he never ceased to consider himself a gentleman.

Another whip on the same coach, Samuel Inns, who—if names go for anything—should certainly have become an innkeeper, became, instead, a farmer, and grew prosperous; and yet another, Tom Davies, was discovered, years afterwards, as a rural postman.

William Jervis, of the “Defiance,” was almost as “gentlemanly” as Meecher, and a good deal more impudent. He would hold forth to the box-seat passenger unfortunate enough to travel by his coach upon the happy days when he had been in service with the Marquis of Exeter—although, to be sure, he had been nothing more than a stable-boy at Burghley House—and would affect to deplore those days, “when he associated with gentlemen.” “And now, sir,” he would bitterly remark, “I’ve got to drive d—d cotton-spinners and calico-printers.” It mattered not at all that it was probably a calico-printer or a cotton-manufacturer who was sitting by him at that moment. Indeed, there was that in his nature which led him to seize the opportunity to hurt the feelings of worthy Manchester men. It naturally followed that the tips he received suffered in number and in value from this extraordinary bias towards quarrelling with his inoffensive passengers: and the balance was not redressed by the rare occasions on which he found a peer or a landed proprietor by his side.

How the coachmen found themselves so constantly and so plentifully in choice cigars of the most expensive kind must remain mysterious. Jervis—who, by the way, refused to be known as “Bill” and was always addressed as “Mr. William Jervis”—smoked the best Havanas as a rule, and could not endure inferior brands. One memorable day, a passenger beside him was puffing happily away at a cheap and nasty smoke—a real *Flor de*

Cabbage—when Jervis turned upon him, and, without further ado, snatched it from his mouth and threw it away.

“Can’t stand a bad cigar,” said Jervis, in not very adequate explanation: “take one of mine.”

The end of this bold and haughty fellow was sad. When railways superseded coaching, he hanged himself behind a stable-door of the “Swan with Two Necks.”

The guards were, to a man, of more consideration and urbanity. Their cue was a general heartiness to every one, from an ostler to a county magnate; but there was much scope for development in the character of a guard, for he came into intimate personal relations with the passengers in general, while the coachman had but one companion—the passenger beside him on the box-seat. Guards were entrusted, not only with parcels of all kinds, but with buying-commissions in town for rural customers; and acted frequently, as was sufficiently well known to the more shady characters of the country-side, as interested intermediaries between poachers and those poulters in London who did not mind dealing in poached game.

Comparatively little has come down to us, save in general terms, of the guards who manned the coaches on this road; but Venables, one of those upon the “Manchester Telegraph,” stands out prominently. He was not, like so many of his brethren, a performer upon the key-bugle, but possessed a beautiful tenor voice which he lifted

up in sentimental song along the roads on sunny days, greatly to the delight of passengers, and to his own profit. He had at least one dramatic experience, in being very nearly chloroformed and flung off the coach by three confederated thieves, who had by some means learned of an extremely valuable case of jewels that had been entrusted to him, which he had, for greater safety, deposited in a locked box under his seat. With the exception of the box-seat passenger, these enterprising would-be jewel thieves formed the only passengers on the roof, and they had reckoned on stifling the guard and heaving him over the side, in the darkness between Ashbourne and Leek, trusting to the noise made by the coach to drown the sound of any scuffle. What they would then have done, after securing the jewels, is only to be guessed at, for the behaviour of the conspirators had early attracted Venables' suspicions, and no sooner had one whipped out his chloroform-pad than he felt himself struck full in the face with stunning force. The coachman's attention was aroused, and the coach was on the point of being stopped when the three jumped off the roof and disappeared in the night.

Venables in later years became a guard on the London and Birmingham Railway.

Skaife, himself a man of some musical abilities, and a good performer on the bass-viol, became landlord of the "Graham Arms," Longtown. Jim Byrns, guard on the Glasgow mail between Preston and Carlisle, was in the next era station-

master at Preston, and saw the trains go by on their way to Shap, whose bleak uplands he had travelled thousands of times. Standing up for miles together, and blowing his horn continually to prevent a collision on foggy nights; or wading through the drifts of a snowstorm and saddling one of the leaders to ride off to a farmhouse and rouse the farm-labourers to come and help with their shovels to dig out His Majesty's mails, he had earned all he received, and a bit over. "Jim," says one who knew him, "was the right man in the right place, a rare hand at the head of a fatigue-party with shovels, and a perfect master of the carpenter's tools in case of a breakdown."

VIII

No traveller along this road, not excepting even kings and queens, statesmen, and other great historical figures, has left so striking and interesting an account of travelling along it as the narratives of two pedestrian journeys between London and Manchester, written by Samuel Bamford. These accounts are supremely interesting in themselves, because they were written by one of the people, and because they put on record, as no other chronicler has done, or could have done, the England of 1807 and 1819, as seen by an intelligent and thinking working-man on tramp. It is an England removed not only by the space of a century from our England, but a crowded century such as never before was seen.

But if we would thoroughly understand Bamford's intensely interesting narratives, which I do not scruple to reprint here at length, we must learn what manner of man he was who wrote them.

Samuel Bamford was born in 1788, at Middleton, near Manchester, and was a weaver and a descendant of weavers. He was by temperament something more; was, indeed, blest, or curst, with the literary taint in its extreme form; was, in short, a poet. At the time when Bamford was growing up, and an eager recipient of ideas, England—and especially the operatives', the artisans', and the agricultural labourers' England—was not the free country it is now. The working-classes had no votes, practically no education, and only too often, as the result of troubles caused by incessant foreign warfare, insufficient food. The country seethed with discontent—not a passing discontent, but a long, wretched era of sullen ill-will that outlasted Bamford's own active period, and culminated in the Chartist agitation of 1839. Bamford, of course, was not fully informed. His writings teem with pictures of the wrongs of Lancashire operatives, while from his descriptions of rural England it might almost be supposed that the agricultural labourer of that time lived an ideal existence; which of course was by no means the case. He only knew at first hand the case of the weavers and the cotton-spinners, which was desperate enough; for that was the era when machinery began to supplant the hand-loom, and manufacturers were growing

rich while many of the workers starved in the combined circumstances of dear food and lack of employment. For himself, as a youth, he seems to have been light-hearted enough, and it was the sufferings, the wrongs, and the disabilities of others, rather than of himself, that eventually led him to become a political agitator. He could, however, scarce help being a rebel, for he came of those who had been convinced Jacobites, and had, later, become Methodists ; and was himself, as we have seen, an idealist and something of a homespun poet.

His career was that of not a few intelligent working men of his time. He was a “peaceful” agitator at a period when even the arguments of the peaceful were met by Governments with the more stern, and in their own way unanswerable, arguments of force. To-day, when agitators spout violence, and advocate reform by explosive bomb, and are regarded with indifference by the authorities, they come at last to Cabinet rank in governments ; but in Bamford’s day a mere assemblage was considered by the authorities a dangerous thing, and was generally dispersed. Bamford himself was arrested, with others, in 1817, on suspicion of high treason, and sent up by coach, in chains, to London, to be examined before the Privy Council. He escaped that time ; but, two years later, was arrested in connection with the famous Reform meeting in St. Peter’s Field, Manchester, August 16th, 1819, which resulted in the tragedy of “Peterloo.”

“This time,” he was assured, “you will certainly be hanged,” but the proceedings resulted in a year’s imprisonment at Lincoln, where he was regarded as an amiable poetic visionary, and greatly indulged and liked. As he grew older, his opinions mellowed, and by the time of the Chartist agitation he had to all intents and purposes ceased to be a Radical, and was decidedly Whiggish. The trend of events since then has so altered the outlook that Bamford would probably be now considered a Tory.

In 1852 the Government offered him a post at Somerset House: a position he accepted for a while, and then resigned with disgust, as being a sheer waste of time. It was not an exalted post, the duties consisting of arranging and cataloguing a vast number of dusty and useless papers connected with forgotten inland revenue affairs: papers that only a Government department would save from the waste-paper dealer. Clearly Bamford was born before his age. Were it all to do now, he would be standing, the head of his Department, in the House of Commons. It is really—this coming into a world not yet ripe for you—a tragedy, if you do but consider it; but there are compensations. He might have been born a century earlier, when, for such as he, life would have ended in a veritable tragedy of flesh and blood. Happy, perhaps, after all, in being born into the midmost era, he died at last, in his eighty-fourth year, in 1872.

So much for a broad view of his career, which,

had he followed an early impulse, would have been very different. In his nineteenth year he took to seafaring, shipping aboard the *Eneas*, a coasting brig plying between South Shields and London. Soon growing tired of the life, he determined to give it up, and with seven shillings in his pockets, deserted his ship in the London Docks. That was in 1807, when likely looking sailors were always in danger of being snapped up by the press gang. His plan of walking the 185 miles home to Manchester was therefore, with so little money, and at such risks, highly adventurous. He hung about in an eating-house in Ratcliffe Highway until dusk, and then set out upon the long journey.

IX

"I THENCE," he says, "went into the city, to St. Paul's, inquiring my way into Aldersgate Street, and when there I ventured to accost a respectable-looking person and requested him to be so kind as to direct me towards Islington, which, of course, he did, and I passed through that suburb without stopping or being questioned. An officer, in naval uniform, whom I met, certainly took more notice of me than was quite to my liking, but he passed on and did not speak. I next inquired the way to Highgate, knowing that if I got there I should be on the direct great northern road, and at Highgate, whilst stopping at a public-house, I ascertained that the next place

on my route would be Whetstone, and the next after that Barnet. I accordingly walked through Whetstone and through Barnet without stopping. I now considered myself fairly launched on my journey. I had been fortunate in getting clear of the vicinity of the shipping and of the city without being questioned, and was now ten miles from St. Paul's. I once more breathed the sweet country air; the smell of mown meadows sometimes came across my path. I had seven shillings in my pocket, and though as yet uncertain of my success, I was full of hope and delighted with the present enjoyment of freedom. I had not gone far, however, before I became somewhat embarrassed, the night was getting far advanced, the country less populous, and I was uncertain both as to the name of my next stage and the course I should keep. I had not gone far, however, before I met a man to whom I put the necessary questions, and who told me to keep on the broad highway, to the left, and that the next town of any note which I should arrive at would be St. Albans. I thanked the man for his information, when he said, ‘Stop; I know what you are, and what you are about.’

“‘Do you?’ said I, rather surprised, but in a good-humoured manner.

“‘Indeed I do,’ replied the man; ‘you are a sailor, and are running away from your ship.’

“‘You might be a wizard,’ I said, ‘for what you say is perfect truth.’

“‘Well, now,’ said he, ‘as you have been as

candid as I was frank, I'll tell you something which may be of use to you.'

"I thanked him.

"'At St. Albans,' he continued, 'a party of marines are stationed, who press every sailor that appears in the town. They even press them off the coaches, or other vehicles, if they get a sight of them. Through St. Albans, however, you must go, and you will be pressed if you appear in the streets; you must, therefore, get through the town without being seen, if possible. Fortunately it may be done. In a short time you will overtake a waggon, which carries goods on this main road. You must get to ride inside of it, get stowed amongst the packages, and never show your face until you are clearly on the other side of the town.'

"I thanked him most gratefully for his information, and begged that he would not mention to any one having seen such a person as myself on the road. He desired that I would make myself easy on that score, and so with expressions of thankfulness on my part, and of kindly wishes on his, we separated.

"It was now about midnight; all was still and silent on the road. I was about eight miles from St. Albans, and by the time I had shortened the distance by three I overtook the waggon, the tail of which being full of soldiers' wives and their children, I could not get in there; the driver, however, offered me a snug place in the hay-sheet—a large and strong horse-hair cloth

which fastened in front of the vehicle, and presented a resting-place as comfortable as a hammock, and quite large enough to conceal me. I, therefore, got into my hiding-place, and was almost instantly fast asleep. I must have ridden about four miles, though to me it seemed but a few minutes since I got in, when the driver awoke me and asked which road I was going when I got through the town ?

“ ‘ Why, the main road, to be sure,’ I said.

“ ‘ Yes, but which main road ? ’ asked the man.

“ ‘ The main road down into the north ; into Lancashire,’ I said. ‘ There is no other, is there ? ’

“ ‘ Oh, yes,’ said the man, ‘ there is the main road to Bedford and those parts, and that’s the road I’m a-going.’

“ Instead of saying, ‘ Well, drive me to Bedford then, or anywhere else, so you don’t land me here in sight of the press-gang ; ’—instead of so considering in my own mind, I might have suddenly become demented, for I alighted from my covert, and shaking the hay-seeds from my clothes as well as I could, I gave the man some copper, and walked right into the broad street of St. Albans.

“ It was a very fine summer’s morning, and being Saturday, the market-place was occupied by numbers of country people setting out their standings of butter, eggs, poultry, and vegetables. Directly through the midst of these market people lay my way, and I stepped it with seeming equanimity, and as much of real indifference as

I could muster, for, after all, as I reflected, if the very worst happened, I should only be disappointed in present hope, and be sent on board a ship of war as many hundreds had been before me. So I walked forward, the people almost lifting their eyes in wonder at seeing a tall, gaunt, weather-browned sailor traversing that perilous ground.

"I had got clear of the market-place, and was proceeding down a flagged footpath leading to the outskirts of the town, and already breathing more freely, when the sound of a light slip-shod step approached behind me. I thought it was some servant girl going out for her morning's milk or hot roll, and never turned my head. A slap on the shoulder, however, and the salutation, 'Hollo, shipmate,' caused me to face about, when what should stand before me but a marine, in his blue overcoat and girdled hat without feather.

"At that moment I felt as little ruffled as if we had been old acquaintance, determined, however, not be taken if either presence of mind or resistance could prevent it.

"'Hollo, shipmate,' said I.

"'What are you?' asked the man.

"'What am I? I'm a servant,' I replied. A term not used in the Royal Navy, but by which persons under contract are distinguished in the trade of our Eastern Coast.

"'A servant?—what's that?'

"'Why, a servant—that's all,' I replied.

"By this time three other marines had joined us.

"'Where's your pass, to pass you through the country?' asked the first man.

"'I have no pass,' I said; 'I'm a free-born subject of this kingdom, and can travel this or any other high-road without carrying a pass at all.'

"The men looked at each other, and then at me. They could not comprehend the reason of my cool manner and unusual language. They had no idea of free-born subjects, nor of sailors travelling without passes.

"'Then you have no papers?' said the first man, who seemed to be the superior of the party.

"'Why, as for that,' I said, 'I daresay I can show a kind of a small matter which will, perhaps, satisfy you for the present.' Saying which, I took my protection from an old black pocket-book which I carried in my hat.

"'Oh, if you have any written papers to show,' he said, 'you must go with us to our captain: I can't read writing.'

"So much the better, I thought, and straight-way displayed the document at length, knowing if it could do me no good, neither could it do me any harm. 'Do you see that?' I asked, pointing to the broad seal of the Admiralty, stamped with an anchor.

"'Oh! be d—d,' said the man; 'you have been discharged from a man-of-war.'

“‘Why, you lubber,’ I said, in a half-familiar way, ‘do you think if I hadn’t I should have come here?’

“‘Ah! he won’t do,’ said one or two of the party.

“‘You may go about your business,’ said the first man, turning to walk off with the others.

“‘Ahoy, there,’ I said, ‘are you going to stop a shipmate on shore this way, without standing so much as a glass of grog for him?’

“‘You be d—d,’ said the corporal, and hastened up the street to join his comrades.

“Several decent-looking farmers, who had left their produce in the market, stood in the cart-road watching the whole proceeding, and when the marines had left, they said, ‘Well, young fellow, you are the first blue-jacket that has slipt through the fingers of yonder scoundrels this long time.’ I entered into friendly conversation with these men, and as they were going my way I had their company on the road as far as Redbourn, where, after partaking with them a glass or two of ale, we parted.

“I next passed through Market Street, and Dunstable, always concealing myself, as well as I could, when I heard a coach coming either way, until it passed. At Hockliffe I rested some time, and had a good sleep behind a hedge. I thence went through Woburn, and afterwards through Newport Pagnell, and when night came, and the glow-worms were shining in the hedges I found myself opposite to a small lone public-house, near

the village of Stoke Goldington, in Buckinghamshire, and about eleven miles from Northampton.

" Into this humble hostelry I entered and got some bread and cheese and ale for supper. The house appeared to be kept by an elderly couple, with a woman servant, and when I mentioned my wish to stop there for the night, they said they could not find me a bed in the house, but if I would put up with a good litter of straw in the stable, I should be welcome to rest there. I accepted their kind offer with pleasure, and lay down, thanking God that I could rest without the hated 'Starboard watch, ahoy' breaking my slumbers; and save that once or twice I was awaked by rats tripping over me, and by the cackling of fowls and the quacking of ducks, a king never enjoyed sounder repose. In the morning, it being Sunday, I brushed my shoes, washed myself well at the pump, and turned my linen the cleaner side out, after which I got a basin of milk and bread for breakfast, and demanding my shot, the old folks told me I had nothing to pay, and so with truly grateful thanks for their kindness I bade them farewell, and continued my journey.

" It was a lovely morning, and my way lay through a tract of country which at every bend and undulation of the road, presented some object, or group, or opening upon scenery, which was continually suggestive of the fact, that this was indeed a land where men and women knew how to live and be happy at their own homes. Here, on one hand, would be a substantial farmhouse,

with its open door displaying much plenty within, its strong-limbed hinds feeding the horses or cleaning the stables, and its ruddy-brown damsels milking the kine, which stood sleepily lashing their tails on their backs or flapping their ears in the sun. The next habitation would probably be a little white cottage, with a low door, and small leaded windows shadowed by viney, and the eaves of the thatch slouched down, as if to prevent the wind from upturning them. A whine and a grunt would be heard in the sty, and a broad garden, darkened at one end by fruit trees, would be abundant

Of herbs and other country messes.

Next a clear tiny rill comes trickling by the road-side; soon we are under a tall young wood, with an old tree here and there matted with ivy or robed in hoar lichen. Soon we perceive a house of the higher order, with its palisades, its gravelled walk, its bright evergreens, its clean steps, and its stately and decent quietude; although if the white blinds were rolled up instead of being down, it would seem all the more frank, cheerful, and Christian like. Next, perhaps, we have a glimpse of a spire rising above tall trees, or the turret of a grey old-looking bell tower sends forth its summons to the villagers for their morning's devotion. Wending on our journey, hills and vales, with meads, pastures, and green crops spread all over their ridges and down to their brook margins, are laid out luxuriantly before

the ever-pleased eye ; whilst far off, in the opening of hoary old woods, are seen tower and battlement of some lordly hall.

“ Through such a country as this, and breathing an air sweeter than which none ever wafted over Paradise, had I walked some five or six miles, when the bark of a dog, and the appearance of sundry low tents, a horse, a mare and her foal, an ass or two, a heap of panniers, a lurcher and a couple of terriers, pans, pots, and a kettle on a fire, which a lad was blowing into red heat, made me aware that I was, for the first time, about to behold a family of gypsies, in their favourite state of encampment. The tribe consisted of three stout men and as many women, one of them very old and deformed, and one, a superb being, with majestic golden pendants, that touched the crimson hood on her shoulders ; a coil of luxuriant hair lay across her knees, as thick as a mainshroud and as glossy as a skein of silk, whilst her magnificently black and darkly shadowed eyes were like two gems, light-emittent through midnight. Two of the men and one female were asleep in tents, some children were also at rest, a boy or two were engaged with the dogs ; the horses and the asses were pasturing, one man was smoking a short pipe, and skinning a rabbit the while, the queen sat plaiting what seemed to be a girdle of many colours, and the old one was tending a cake in the embers. A young damsel sat there—a beauty such as I had never before beheld, not even in Lancashire, for she was

different from them all, though not surpassing—nothing human could do that—but this had a feminine grace, and a faultless beauty of a type which was entirely new to me. A scarlet strap and a short sleeve were the only covering to her shoulders, her neck and arms being entirely bare. Over the front of a laced bodice of various hues, hung a small bib of fine linen, which so far covered her bosom as modesty required. A green kirtle bound her waist and fell below her knees, leaving her legs and feet, which were models of symmetry, as innocent of hose or pumps as they were at her birth. Her complexion was a clear olive, whilst her features I can only describe as being strikingly impressive from their beauty, and much like those which I had seen in the portraits and on the statues of Oriental nymphs and goddesses of antiquity. Her hair, of raven lustre, was plaited and wreathed on her head, where it was bound with ribbons of bright and grave colours mingled, and held by a comb, and thenee dividing, fell in graceful locks over her shoulders, and below her bosom. She was on her knees, sipping broth from a china basin, and with a silver spoon. I accosted the party with the usual salutation of ‘good-morning,’ to which the man and the two women replied. We chatted as I stood there respecting various matters, as the road, the weather, fellow wayfarers whom I had met, and things of that kind, and in the course of our conversation the man informed me that my best way to Leicester would be through Welford,

and not through Market Harborough, which was the more common route. After satisfying my curiosity as well as I could consistently with a decent observation, I bade them good-bye, and was coming away when the mistress of the party, or queen, as I may call her, asked me if a mess of broth would be acceptable. I had been thinking before that never had broth smelled so temptingly as this did ; I therefore expressed my thankful acceptance of her offer, and taking a seat on the sod I partook of a breakfast such as I had little expected to find at such a table, for besides the broth, the young nymph, by direction of the queen, placed before me bread, cold mutton, fowl, cheese, with mustard, and green onion as a relish, so I laid to as freely and as plenteously, according to my wants, as ever did alderman at a corporation feast. My kind entertainers seemed the more pleased the more freely I partook, and after making a most excellent meal, during which I was neither annoyed by many questions, nor embarrassed by ceremony—for they mostly spoke to each other, and that in a language I did not understand—I again expressed my sincere thanks and pursued my journey, deeply interested by the scene I had quitted, and particularly so by the two amazing beauties I had beheld.

“ Northampton, a garrison town, was the next place through which I had to pass, and as a recruiting party of marines was stationed there—as my friend the gypsy had informed me, though

whether or not they had orders to press he could not tell—I waited outside until the quiet hour when people had all gone home from church, and had got seated at their dinners, before I essayed the perilous experiment of walking through. The wished-for time soon came, the bells had all ceased tolling, and the streets were nearly deserted, when I stepped at a leisurely calm pace, as if in no great haste to be gone, along the clear broad causeway of that neat and cleanly town. Everything seemed to my wish ; it was a hot day : the sun glared on the pavement and against the windows ; the blinds and curtains were nearly all closed ; the doors were open to let in air, and I could hear the children laughing, the mothers scolding, and the knives and forks clattering as the good folks were partaking their happy meal. I envied them not, I only wished in my heart that every soul in the place might be compelled to eat, and never cease eating, until I had walked clear and far away of that burning pavement and blistering flag-road ; and in sooth I began to think it certainly would be so, the streets were so quiet, when all at once, pondering as I went, and with my hat pulled over my brow, I found I was approaching a marine, who was crossing me at right angles. I would have given the world if the fellow had only been like the townsfolks, quietly employed with his pudding, instead of being where he was, but I took care not to betray any outward sign of either alarm or dissatisfaction. He was alone, and no other

person was in sight, and if he stopped me, and my old protection trick failed, I had nothing to do but either to out-run him, or knock him down, or both, and so decide the matter. These thoughts, however, and these resolves, which came as quick as a throb, were no sooner present, than, to my surprise as well as satisfaction, the man merely looked at me in an ordinary way, and nodding, said, ‘Good voyage, shipmate,’ to which I readily replied, ‘Good quarters, shipmate,’ and each passed on.

“ And now, as the protection which I have once or twice mentioned will not be any more alluded to, I may as well explain, that these documents, which were given to apprentices, were no protection at all save whilst the apprentice was on board the ship to which he belonged, or if on shore, was engaged in the lawful service of his master. If the navy was greatly short of hands, not only apprentices were seized despite of their protections, but even carpenters and mates of coasting vessels would sometimes be made free with. In my case, therefore, who was absconding from my service, the document, had it been perused, instead of being a protection would have been a detection, inasmuch as it would have required a degree of ingenuity beyond my command to have shown why I, an apprentice on board a coasting vessel on the North Sea, should be found traversing the streets of St. Albans, or of Northampton, the king’s veritable *terra firma*—instead of being on his other element, the ocean.

“This escapade was a great relief to my mind, since having now passed this second garrison town I had not much fear of being interfered with by press-gangs, though, wherever there was a party of marines, it was possible that I might be questioned. The weather was, as I have intimated, that of a truly English summer’s day. Towards evening, when the heat was mitigated to a joyous coolness, came a breeze that swept odours from the wild rose and the honey-bine. Then, by the hill-sides, or along the valleys, or up the meadow paths, appeared young and happy couples, the lads in their clean smock-frocks, and the lasses in their new pumps, smart caps, and ribbons, and all seemingly so full of happy, contented, and hopeful love, that the tears dimmed my eyes as I looked towards them. ‘Ah!’ I thought, ‘and will not I be walking with one as dear and as bonny as any of them before long?’ And thus as I wandered forward waned that sweet Sabbath eve, and small indeed was the amount of ‘cash in my locker’ wherewith to procure a lodging, but on I went, and I must have passed some seven or eight miles beyond Welford, when, it being nearly dark, I stopped at a good-looking public-house, and after paying for a glass of beer, which took nearly the last copper I had, I asked the landlord if there was not a snug corner in his stable or hay-loft in which I could be allowed to rest till morning? He said the cattle all slept and pastured out, and he had not so much as a lap of straw on the

premises ; but if I would walk on a couple of miles or so, I should arrive at a place called Wigston, where the yearly feast was being held, and if I only got amongst the young fellows there, I would have all I wanted, and that too for nothing. So thus discouraged in one respect, and encouraged in another, I again commenced my journey, and walked a long way, the eve settling into darkness, and not a glimmer from a house, nor the bark of a sheep-dog, nor any other indication of inhabitants to be seen or heard. I kept on in this way until I became quite tired, and looked in vain for some barn, or outhouse, or cattle-shed, in which I might lay down, but not a vestige of cattle or cattle-shed was to be seen. Not even the tinkle of a sheep-bell could be heard in that vast stillness. At length I thought I espied something like swathes of grass on the other side of a low fence, and climbing over, I found them to be what I expected. I straightway therefore commenced making my bed, and collecting a number of swathes together I lay down on part of them, and pulled the remainder over me until I was pretty well covered, and so, with a bunch under my head for a pillow, and my hat for a sleeping cap, I bade good-night to one star which hung winking above, and in a moment care was no more. When I awoke it was broad day, and the lark was singing overhead. I jumped up, shook off the dewy grass and clover, and thanking God for so excellent a bed, with freedom, I leaped over the fence, and pursued my journey.

" It was now evident that unless I could hit upon some plan whereby I could procure sustenance on the road, my travels must soon cease. My last penny had been expended that morning in the purchase of a cake, and I had not a single halfpenny towards carrying me eighty-six miles. As for having recourse to dishonest means, that never entered my thoughts, whilst to beg I could not yet bemean myself. Something, however, must be devised, and as I wore under my trousers a pair of stout woollen drawers, nearly new, I concluded on selling them, if I could meet with a customer; and accordingly I went over the hedge into a quiet little corner, and stripped off my drawers, tying them up in a small pocket-handkerchief which I had taken care to preserve. I was so entirely satisfied with this proceeding, so easy with respect to present means of subsistence, that I fell into a profound sleep, and so continued during a considerable time. On arriving at Leicester, I stopped at a clothes shop, at the door of which an elderly female stood, of a very decent appearance. I accosted her, and entering the shop, offered her my drawers on sale. She examined them, and asked how much I expected for them? ' Well,' I said, ' I should not be very particular, but I thought they would be cheap at two shillings.'

" ' Two shillings!' said the dame—her keen eyes fixed upon me—' Why, young man, I would not give two shillings for all the clothes you have on your back.'

"I said I was sorry to hear her say that, but how much would she give, then?"

"'You are a sailor, I suppose.'

"'I am, or at least have been,' I replied.

"'I have a son that is a sailor also,' she said.

"'I wish him a safe return then,' I replied.

"'Aye, a safe return, with plenty of prize money,' she quickly added.

"'Be it as you wish,' I replied.

"'Are you going to see your friends?' she asked.

"'I'm going to stay with them, I hope.'

"'Well, I'll tell you what I'll do,' said the dame. 'I'll just give you sixpence for the drawers, and that's what I call dealing handsomely with you.'

"'Could you not give me something more, mother,' I said, trying to soften her by that tender appellation, though but with small hope of success.

"'Not one half-farthing more shall I give, if you talk till night,' said the dame, 'and if I ever get the money back again, I shall be lucky.'

"I still chaffered with her, trying to obtain a small advance, but it was of no use, and considering that I might dodge round the whole town, and be no better, I resigned the drawers.

"'Where's the napkin they were tied in?' she asked.

"'It's here,' I replied, showing it.

“ ‘Oh,’ she said, ‘I must have that, you know. I bid at the whole lot.’

“ My anger was equalled only by my disgust—the little napkin was very dear to me—and taking up the drawers I was about replacing them in the napkin with a view to leave the shop, when judging as I supposed my purpose, she threw down a sixpence, saying, ‘Give me the drawers: if you were my own son I could not behave better to you.’

“ I first secured the sixpence, and, then putting down the drawers, said, ‘God help the son who has such a mother as you to come to,’ and left the place.

“ My next business was to buy a small loaf, which I soon did, and ate it with a voracious appetite as I went on my way. I proceeded down the street and out of the town without being once annoyed by the appearance of either marine or recruiting party. I passed through Montsorrel and Loughborough without stopping, and took my rest and a draught of porter at a small public-house beyond the latter place. After this, towards evening, I met a company of women coming from the hayfield; they were disposed to be merry, and dancing and singing with their forks and rakes on their shoulders, they formed a ring around me. At length one of the youngest of them sang a snatch of a popular song:

I will be sure to return back again
If I go ten thousand miles, my dear,
 If I go ten thousand miles,

“They next produced a keg and a basket, and the kind creatures made me sit down amidst them, and partake of their brown bread and hard cheese, which I did heartily, and quenched my thirst with a good draught of their home-brewed ale, after which, with many thanks on my part, and kind wishes on theirs, we separated.

“If I could have made up my mind to begging, here had been a fine opportunity for trying my talents in that line on these kind and sisterly beings, but I could not find in my heart to inform them how sorely I was distressed: and though I knew that unless I either solicited relief on the road, or some unforeseen assistance came to hand, I must at least endure two days of horrible starvation and fatigue, I could not humble myself to the act of craving charity. So still cherishing a kind of irrational and gloomy hope beyond hope—whilst my benefactors returned to their cheerful and welcome homes, I advanced into the shades of evening, and the grey and solemn stillness of a summer’s night had enshrouded all around when I arrived at the village of Shardlow.

“At one little window only could I see a blinking light. I knocked at the door, and it was opened; an old couple who were preparing to retire to rest seemed somewhat alarmed at my entrance, so I hastened to make known to them that I was a stranger on the road, and would thank them to direct me either to a hayrick or a cattle-shed, where I could find shelter for the night. They commiserated the hardship of my

lot in being necessitated to ask such a question, and directed me to a stable connected with a public-house a little farther on the way, the residents of which would probably be gone to bed. I thanked the old folks, and without much trouble found out the house and the stable alluded to. All was dark and silent around ; the stable was quite unoccupied, and not a straw nor a lock of hay could I find within the place. I tried to make the manger my sleeping berth—not without a grateful remembrance of the one at Bethlehem—but I could not fit my shoulders to the trough, and sleep being denied me there, I lay down on the bare pavement below, thinking, carnal though I was, that if the manger once served as a bed for a heavenly Lord, the stones beneath one might even suffice for a wandering sinner like me ; and so I stretched my wearied limbs on the floor and fell asleep. In the morning I rose as refreshed as if my bed had been one of down, and leaving my sleeping apartment in as tidy a condition as I found it, I quietly shut the door after me, and continued my journey. I spent my last penny in the purchase of a cake as I entered Derby, and as penny cakes were rather small concerns in those days, mine was quickly devoured.

“ I passed through the town without stopping, and soon found myself once more amid the beautiful scenery of which our island is so rife. After walking a mile or two I overtook a little crabbed-looking middle-aged man, who, notwithstanding

that he limped on one foot, and travelled with a stick, got over the ground rather cleverly. I soon found out that he was a stay and corset-maker by trade, was a great professor of religion, and was going to Manchester, as he said, to pick up a penny in the way of business, and 'to speak a word to the heathen' when opportunity offered. And now, I thought to myself, if this man has only money enough about him to carry us both to Manchester, and will undertake to provide for me on the way, I shall look upon him as one sent by Divine providence. I was not long in ascertaining that he had the means to assist me, and then, in return for his communication, I gave him a short history of my adventures, without letting him know the whole truth, and concluded by a proposal that as we were both journeying to one town, we should keep company, and that he should furnish the means for my very frugal subsistence till we arrived there, when I would introduce him to my friends, who would thank him for his kindness, and amply repay him besides. The prospect of turning a good penny on the road appeared, from the manner in which I stated the case, so plain and certain, that the little man assented to the proposal, and we jogged on to Ashbourne, where he paid for a basin of milk, and a pennyworth of bread for each, and this was our breakfast. Soon after leaving Ashbourne, we fell into company with a private of light dragoons, going home on furlough. At first his presence was not very agreeable to me, but I soon had

reason to conclude that he had not, for the present at least, any designs of entrapping me, so we three journeyed together. We now began to mount the hills over which we had to pass to Buxton, and a long, dreary twenty-four miles the journey would be, as I was given to understand. The day was very hot, and I required refreshment in order to enable me to support the heat and fatigue, but I found my commissary was not going to be at all prodigal of supplies. In walking about ten miles he paid for one gill of sorry treacle beer only, and shortly afterwards, finding I could not keep pace with my comrades, I sat down on a knoll by the roadside, and they went forward, disappearing over the long moors. After some time, having got a draught of blessed water at a little rill, I made an essay to proceed, and had not gone far ere I arrived at a large inn and posting-house called New Haven. A haven it was indeed to me. I asked one of the stable men for permission to lie down on the hay-baulks, which he civilly granted, and there I remained sleep-bound until far in the afternoon. On awaking I set forward again, quite refreshed and in good spirits, and was the more anxious to get to Buxton since I should then be only twenty-two miles from home, a distance which I thought I should be able to walk with the refreshment of water only, should chance not throw in my way a particle of solid food. Encouraged thus by the consciousness of being almost on the verge of my native county, and of being now traversing the

tops of some of those hills which I had so often contemplated from our playground at Middleton, I stepped forward with a light heart, over a country of waste and cheerless moors, and of rolling, billowy hills. Though greatly fatigued, as much probably from the heat of the three last days as from the want of food, I continued, with many cheering anticipations, to urge my feeble steps in the direction of my hoped-for resting-place for the night, though God only knew what sort of a resting-place that was to be. Another opportunity now occurred for my asking charity, and I made up my mind to do it. It was a secluded place in the bottom of a valley. I was descending one side, and a gentleman, mounted and walking his horse at a quiet pace, was coming down the other. We met nearly at the bottom, and I looked at him and lifted my hat, but when my hand should have been extended, and the words of supplication should have passed my lips, I could not do either the one or the other, and the gentleman, merely nodding in return to my civility, passed on.

“ Shortly after this I began to feel sickly ; my head became confused, and I sat down merely as I thought to rest and take breath, but I probably fainted, since when consciousness returned night had completely set in. I however got up as well as I could, and again put my now stiffened limbs in motion, and had not proceeded more than a mile ere I became aware that I was approaching numerous habitations, and pressing forward

I was soon at the entrance into the village of Buxton.

"My first endeavour was to discover, if I could, a stable or outhouse of some sort, in which I could take up my lodgings—the last of the sort which I should want on my present journey. I had not hovered about the street long ere I espied a ladder reared against what appeared to be a hay-loft, so I crept up as daintily as if I had been mounting to a curtained bed of down, and found to my great joy that I was on a boarded floor, well-stored with hay. Here, then, was my bed at once, and now all my troubles were over. I was groping about for a place to make my bed, when, as sudden as a flash, I fell through the floor, and found myself lying on my back in a lower place. I was rather confused at first, and scarcely conscious of what had happened, but was soon made aware that something was vastly wrong by screams of murder, with occasional prayers and imprecations. Presently a door opened, and several men entered the place with lights, when I found that I was lying in the stall of a stable, with my legs across the body of a female, who continued making a great noise, and whose dress was not in the most decorous condition. Though shaken by the fall and still confused, I immediately got upon my feet, when one of the men, holding a lanthorn to my face, demanded to know why I brought my strumpet into his stable. In vain I protested that I knew nothing whatever of the woman. He insisted that I did,

and that probably I should have laid hands on other game also if I found anything worth carrying away. To this insinuation I had no reply save a repetition of the assertion that I was innocent, and I added that I only became aware that any living being was in the place by the accident of falling through the hole in the floor above, which I pointed out, and also stated my motive for going there. By this time the woman had risen from the straw, and was busy arranging her dress.

“‘Why,’ said one of the men, ‘is not that the girl that has been in company with the limping fellow and the soldier all night?’

“‘The very same,’ said another.

“‘Oh! I see how it is,’ rejoined a third—‘where is the old fox concealed? he has not been in the tap-room since this woman left it.’

“‘He’s somewhere in the place,’ said one of the men.

“‘He’ll be found not far off,’ said another.

“Instantly they began to search, when a slight noise in the next stall led them to look that way, and they discovered a pair of legs sticking out from under some straw.

“Straight that hunting note which is raised on the taking of a fox was shouted by half-a-dozen voices, and seizing the legs, they pulled out my little lame friend, the stay and corset-maker, with whom I joined company that morning.

“‘Here he is, sure enough,’ said one of the men, when they had done shouting.

“ ‘The old dog bagged alive,’ said another.

“ ‘Well, how has this come about?’ asked the owner of the place. ‘What account can you give of yourselves?’ he continued.

“ Here a scene and a dialogue ensued, which, however diverting it might be to those present, I will take the liberty to omit from my narrative. Suffice it to say, that the landlord cleared the place, locked the door, and put the key in his pocket, the whole of the party, the woman excepted, entering the public-house to which the stable was attached, and from whence the greater part of them had issued hearing the noise. Here several persons were drinking, smoking, and singing in a kind of kitchen or family room, and amongst them, drunk and nearly asleep, was my other fellow traveller of the morning, the young dragoon. The stay-maker was now sadly bantered on account of his adventure, and at last, in order to make his peace with the landlord and the company, he paid for a quart of hot ale and gin, of which I took one or two small glasses, though I would much rather have had something to eat.

“ After I had sat in this company a considerable time, weary and longing for repose, I espied an opportunity to slip out of the place, and again mounting the ladder to the hay-loft, I made sure of not falling through that time. Quickly was I oblivious of all care, and did not awaken until the morning was far advanced. On descending from my bed I inquired about the soldier and the stay-maker, and being informed that they had

started three hours before, I turned my steps through the village and followed them.

"Wearily, and rather faintly, though with a good heart, I mounted the hills which enclose Buxton on the Lancashire side, and then, with greater ease, I began to descend the long road down to Whaley Bridge, my only refreshment being now and then a draught of water from the small mountain rills which trickled through their rock channels on the moors. After passing Whaley Bridge I began to ascend, slowly enough, the steep old road to Disley. The day was again very hot, and when I had mounted this hard path of the olden time to a considerable distance, I rested on a stone wall opposite some cottages, at the door of one of which I soon espied an old woman winding bobbins. I asked her for a draught of water, when she immediately rose to oblige me, and brought forth a basin of delicious butter-milk. I thanked her most gratefully, and as I stood leaning against the doorpost, much fatigued, she asked if I could eat some oaten cake, and on my saying I could with pleasure, she invited me to come in and sit down, and speedily presented me with half of a good substantial cake, baked thick and without being riddled. I quickly dispatched the cake, when the old woman—a fine-looking old mother, she was—casting on me a glance of womanly feeling said, 'Bless me, lad—for thou art somebody's lad, I dare say—thou hast been famished, almost dying of hunger, I'm sure; couldst thou eat another

piece of cake?' I said I could, and informed her that this was the first food I had tasted since I left Ashbourne the morning previous. She accordingly gave me the other half of the cake, part of which I ate, and the remainder, with some cheese, she made me put in my pocket, as a snack on the road.

"Blessings on the memory of that kind old woman! I thought she was much like what I remembered of my own mother, only more aged. I stole many a look at her as she moved about the house. Blessings be ever with her memory!

"After leaving this cottage, refreshed and somewhat rested, I was soon at Disley, and from thence I passed through Bullock Smithy and Stockport to Manchester, where I arrived at dusk, and took up my quarters at the house of a friend until night had set in, when I visited my father and other relations, and was received by them with a joyful welcome. I thought it rather strange, however, that they expressed not any surprise at my return, and on further conversation I learned that my kind friend, the little stay-maker, had visited them the same day, and had prepared them for my coming. He had made them quite easy respecting my condition, having told them that he had advanced me money sufficient to carry me home comfortably, and that I was coming on at my leisure. The rascal was consequently very well received by them, and went away trebly repaid for what he said he had advanced to me. My father, however, though he

abhorred the fraud and the deception, said, ‘Never mind the money. “My son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found.”’”

X

FATE willed it so that Bamford was again to tramp this long road. It was in 1819, when he journeyed the reverse way, from Manchester to London, to surrender to his recognisances and to stand his trial on a charge of seditious assembly. Omitting his preliminary reflections of the first few miles, we will join him as he walks into Macclesfield :

“ I now walked on at a quick pace, and had not gone many miles before I overtook a young man and his wife, who I soon learned were going to Macclesfield that night. I said I was going to that place, and somewhat further ; and when I told them of my destination, and that I intended to walk the journey, they were quite glad of my company, and we agreed to travel together. I soon learned they were going from Preston to Loughborough, where they intended to settle amongst the woman’s relatives. They were a very good-looking couple—he a stout, florid young fellow, and she a tall, handsome-featured woman ; she was also a good walker, which he was not, being already foot-sore.

“ On our arrival at Macclesfield my companions rested at a public-house, whilst I went in search of some honest Radicals, to whom Saxton had

given me letters of introduction. They were chiefly working men; some of them were in pretty good circumstances, being master weavers. I soon found them, and they took myself and fellow travellers to a decent inn, where we got refreshments, and spent a very agreeable evening. In the morning, when our bill was called for, there was no charge against me, the kind friends who were with us the night before having settled everything which stood to my account.

"We set off from Macclesfield about six o'clock on a lovely morning, and soon were in a finely variegated and wooded country, as any one will allow who has travelled betwixt Macclesfield and Leek. After walking some four or five miles we began to talk about breakfast, and my male companion said he would have cheese and bread and ale, whilst I anticipated a good breakfast of tea, with a couple of eggs, if they were to be had. Soon after the man stopped, and his wife said as we went forward, she was glad I preferred tea for breakfast. I asked her why, and she said her husband was a very hard-working man, and a good husband on the whole, but he was a little too greedy, and expected her to fare as he did on the road, instead of letting her have a few indulgences, such as tea and coffee. It was not from want of money, she said, for he had enough with him, nor was it want of kindness to her—it was over-carefulness alone which made him so. But now, as I was for having tea, he would hardly for shame deny her having some also. I promised,

if it was necessary, to put a word in for her, and she thanked me. Having travelled a little further we came to a neat little tap-house, on the descent of a valley, where the cool shadow of trees made the air grateful and refreshing, and a tiny wimpling rill ran like melted pearls over dark gravel, beneath young-leaved hazels, and by green-swarded margins. Here we agreed to stop and take what the house afforded. The smart-handed landlady soon placed a nice repast of tea, bread-and-butter, and a couple of eggs before me, whilst a jug of ale, with bread and cheese, was presented to my fellow-travellers. The woman said she could not eat, and I asked her to come and join me at tea, adding very likely the cost would be little more for tea than for the breakfast they had before them. On hearing this opinion, her husband told her to get some tea, and then with great pleasure the woman came to my table and made a hearty breakfast.

" We rested awhile at this pleasant little hostel ; the man and I (I might as well call him John at once) each smoked our pipe, with the window thrown up, and the cool breeze wafting around us. It was delicious to breakfast as we had done, and then to repose after a fine, health-creating morning's walk. John, however, I soon found, had not many conversational matters at his command. He was a plain honest bricksetter ; knew something of the value of work in his line, could make out an estimate of the expense of buildings and such things, and those were the most of what

he understood. Not so his wife : she was a sensible, well-informed woman for her station, and it was evident that on most subjects (except the purse-keeping) she was his superior, and exercised much influence over him. She had been, as she afterwards informed me, a servant at an inn at Loughborough, where the young bricksetter, then on tramp, fell in love with and married her. They went down to Preston to settle amongst his friends ; he was very wild and reckless, and one day he fell from some scaffolding and was shockingly maimed, so that he could never be so stout again as he had been. Latterly he had been more steady, and had saved a trifle of money, and as they had no children she had prevailed on him to return with her and live amongst her relations, and that was the cause of their journey.

"At Leek we rested again during an hour, took some refreshment, and then resumed our journey towards Ashbourne. In passing through the streets of Leek we noticed a number of weavers at their looms, and obtained permission to go into the weaving places to see them. The rooms where they worked were on the upper floors of the houses ; they were in general very clean ; the work was all in the silk small-ware line, and many of the weavers were young girls some of them good-looking, most of them very neatly attired, and many with costly combs, earrings, and other ornaments of value, showing that they earned a sufficiency of wages, and had imbibed a taste for the refinements of dress. The sight

of these young females, sitting at their elegant employment, producing rich borderings and trimmings, in good, well-aired, and well-finished apartments—some of them approached by stairs with carpets and oilcloths on them—the girls also being dressed in a style which two hundred years before would have been deemed rich for a squire's daughter, was to me very gratifying; whilst to my travelling companions it was equally surprising, and they expressed their feelings by sundry exclamations of astonishment.

"The afternoon was very hot, and we walked slowly—that is, I and the woman did—for poor John was sadly hobbled with his sore feet, and we had to keep sitting down and waiting on the road for him to come up. At length we gave him an hour's respite by stopping at a public-house about four miles from Ashbourne. It was almost dark when we entered that very clean and pleasant little town. At the first inn we went into we found accommodation, and, after partaking a good warm supper, with some hearty draughts of old ale and pipes for dessert, we sought that repose which had now become necessary.

"The next morning we were up again early and continued my plan of travelling—namely, to walk a good stretch before breakfast. We sat down after walking about six miles: our meal was as good as we could wish—coffee and eggs for the woman and myself, and ale, cheese, and bread for friend John. We were now in a right

farming country where large stacks, barns, and cattle-sheds were quite common on the roadsides. The roads were broad and in good condition, and there were very often wide slips of good land on each side, apparently much trodden by cattle. Occasionally we came to a neat, homely-looking cottage, with perhaps a large garden and a potato-ground attached, and with rose shrubs and honey-bine clustering around the door. These were specimens of our real English homes; there was no mistaking them; in no other country do such exist, and he or she who leaves this land expecting to meet with like homes in foreign ones, will be miserably disappointed. In England alone is the term 'home,' with all its domestic comforts and associations, properly understood. May it long continue the home of the brave, and eventually become the home of the really free!

"We stopped but a short time at Derby; I visited, however, the grave of Jeremiah Brandreth, in St. Werburgh's churchyard, and paid to the remains of that deluded victim a tribute of heartfelt emotion. I then joined my comrades and we hastened on, as well as John's feet would allow him, towards Shardlow. There he got into a cart, and the female and I walked on, promising to wait at Kegworth till the cart arrived. Some rain had fallen a few days before; the Trent had been flooded, and of all the verdant pastures I had ever beheld, none have surpassed the rich, vivid green of the meadows between Shardlow and Kegworth. It was refreshing to look upon

them, and as the sweet air came across them, cooling one's dewy brows, one almost felt tempted to stop and seek an abiding-place in the delicious valley.

"During our walk we had a very agreeable chat ; I entered into some particulars of my early life and into matters always interesting to females, namely, the histories of some tender attachments which I had formed, but which had lapsed, either through my own indifference, or, as I was pleased to suppose, the faithlessness of the objects I loved. This seemed to touch a tender chord in my companion, she was all attention, and when I paused, she put questions which compelled me to resume my narrative. I spoke of the noble and exalted pleasures of true affection, and pictured the sickening pangs of love betrayed, and the unhappiness which must eventually haunt the betrayer, whether man or woman. I repeated some verses of poetry, which heightened the picture, and at last, on looking aside, I found that her cheeks were glistening with tears. She now became more communicative, and informed me that she had somewhat to accuse herself of with respect to a young man, the first indeed whose addresses she had encouraged : that she now often thought she behaved coldly towards him without any just cause, and that, in consequence, the lad enlisted and joined his regiment before his friends knew what had become of him ; that she soon afterwards was married, and he was killed in battle. Weeping freely, she added

that at times she accused herself of having been the cause of his death. I consoled her as well as I could by the reflection that her conduct appeared to have risen more from youthful carelessness than want of feeling. She said he was an only child, and his mother was still living, and she thought if she could get settled down beside the old woman it would afford her some consolation to assist her and be a child to her in her old age. I approved of this with all my heart ; and now, being at Kegworth, we stepped into a public-house and awaited the arrival of the cart, which soon came up, and after a cup or two of ale betwixt John and myself, and a whiff of tobacco, we set forward, and a short journey through a pleasant neighbourhood brought us to Loughborough.

“ Nothing would satisfy my fellow travellers but my accompanying them to the house of the old folks, as they called them. I was not much averse to going with them, especially as I knew that I must stop somewhere in the town all night. I accordingly accompanied them along several streets and turnings, until we were in a humble, but decent-looking thoroughfare, when, knocking at the door, the woman in a whisper told me her parents lived there. A tall, venerable-looking dame opened the door, and in a moment our female traveller was locked in her arms. A cheerful, clear-complexioned old man at the same time got up from his chair and shook John heartily by the hand, and on John mentioning me as a

fellow traveller, he gave me a like frank reception. He then embraced his daughter, and when the first emotions of tenderness were over, we sat down to a very comfortable but homely refection, and the family party became quite cheerful and communicative. Meantime the news had got abroad amongst the neighbours, several came in, and in a short time we were joined by a fine-looking girl, a younger daughter of the old folks, who had been at work in one of the manufactories. In short, we had a joyful family and neighbourly meeting; liquor was sent for, a young fellow tuned up his fiddle, and the old couple led off a dance, which was followed by others; liquor was brought in abundance, and the hours flew uncounted.

"John and I and the old man were seated in a corner smoking and conversing, when I observed the younger sister come in somewhat fluttered. She took the old mother and her sister aside, and by the expression of their countenances and the motion of her hands, I perceived that something troublesome and mysterious had occurred. In fact, she was explaining to them, as I afterwards learned, that in going to the public-house for more liquor she had to pass a stage-coach which was stopped, and that on looking up she saw a young soldier getting off the coach, with his knapsack slung on one shoulder and a foraging-cap pulled over his face, but she saw enough to convince her that he was Robert—the same who once courted her sister

and who they had heard was killed in battle. This news, as may be imagined, was soon known in the house, and caused a great sensation, especially amongst the women. We had just learned the cause of their whisperings, when the door opened and a young fellow, pale, slender, and well formed, wearing regimentals and an undress cap, and with a knapsack properly adjusted, stepped respectfully into the room and, seeing the old woman, he put out his hand and took hers and spoke to her affectionately, calling her mother. She gazed a moment on his face, as if incredulous of what she beheld. The company had drawn in a half circle at a distance around them ; John, myself and the old man kept our seats, the younger sister stood beside her mother, and the married one was on a low seat behind her.

“ ‘ I scarcely know what to say to you, Robert,’ said the old woman. ‘ I am glad to see you have escaped death, for your mother’s sake, but I almost wish you had not called here to-night.’

“ ‘ And why not, mother ? my *other* mother,’ he said, trying to force a smile. ‘ Why not call at a house where I left friends, and mayhap a little of something more than friendship ? ’

“ ‘ Nothing beyond friendship now, Robert,’ said the mother, endeavouring to appear cool.

“ ‘ Why, where is Margaret ? ’ he said ; ‘ I hope nothing has befallen her ? ’

“ ‘ Margaret is your friend,’ said the old woman, ‘ but she is nothing more now. Yonder sits her husband,’ pointing to John.

“ John advanced towards the young man and took his hand, and, looking towards Margaret, said he believed she had been his wife about two years.

“ The soldier trembled, and staggered to a seat.

“ Margaret got up and gave her hand to the young soldier, saying she welcomed him home with all the regard of a sister. She was now married, as he had heard, and was about to settle in Loughborough, and if he had never returned, his old mother should not have wanted the tender offices of a child whilst she lived.

“ ‘ Thank you, Margaret,’ he said ; ‘ that is some consolation ; you wouldn’t neglect my old mother, I know.’ He put his hand over his eyes and burst into tears.

“ ‘ I would not, Robert,’ she said, ‘ and if in former times I did not value you as perhaps you deserved, I was willing to make the only atonement I could by cheering the drooping years of your supposed childless parent.’

“ ‘ That is very good ! ’ ‘ very fair on both sides ! ’ ‘ very handsome ! ’ said a number of voices. Neither of the interested parties spoke, they were both deeply affected.

“ The old woman and youngest daughter then conducted Margaret into another room. The old man shook hands with the soldier and endeavoured to cheer him. Meantime, information had been conveyed to Robert’s mother, and she now entered the room, shaking and leaning on a stick. The

meeting was most tender ; it was such as could only take place betwixt a parent and child equally affectionate. The dancing had at first been given up ; a warm, substantial supper was in a short time spread on the board ; Robert and his mother took some of the refreshment and then went home. Margaret did not make her appearance. Shortly after supper I was conducted to lodgings at an inn, and spent most of the night in confused dreams of the strange scenes which, like those of a romance, had passed before me.

"The following morning I breakfasted at the old folks', according to promise. I asked not any question, nor did I hear anything further. Margaret's eyes appeared as if she had been weeping. John was attentive to her, and she seemed as if she valued his attentions, but could not entirely cast the weight from her heart. I left the family, to pursue my way, and John accompanied me as far as Quorn, where we parted, and I never saw him afterwards.

"I merely walked through Mountsorrel, and leaving Rothley on my right, where many Knights Templars lie interred, I pushed on to Leicester, where, having spent the remainder of the day in looking at various antiquities, particularly the chamber in which Richard III. slept on the night previous to the battle of Bosworth, and the bridge over which his dead body was thrown on its return, I took up my abode for the night at a respectable-looking little pot-house. Here I met with excellent accommodation, and enjoyed the

lively conversation of some stocking-weavers, who, when they learned from whence I came and the share I had borne in Lancashire politics, would almost have carried me in their arms.

“The following morning I pursued my journey, and passing through a fine country, consisting of sheep pastures and arable land, I dined at Market Harborough, and in the afternoon went on to Northampton.

“I scarcely knew where to apply for lodgings ; there were so many snug-looking public-houses that I was spoiled with choice. At length I entered one of the said neat-looking places and asked a decent elderly woman if I could have lodgings there. She frankly said at once that I could not, they were full of soldiers ; and, in fact, I had seen a large number on parade as I came through the town. I asked if she could direct me to a place, and she pointed to a respectable-looking house a little higher in the street. I went there, but received the same reply ; they were ‘full of soldiers,’ and I learned that the latter were but just come into the town and were on their march to Liverpool, for Ireland. I now was directed to a public-house where coachmen and guards stopped, and where many travellers were in the habit of resting. It was getting late and almost dark, and I determined not to be shuffled out of this next place by any pretence. I entered a rather handsome bar parlour, where a numerous company was sitting, apparently farmers, who were taking their pipes and glass, after the fair or market. I asked

the landlady, a smart but unassuming woman, if I could have a bed for the night. From the moment I entered she had been eyeing me over, and seeing, as I suppose, my shoes all dust, and myself, a brown, and not a very polished-looking customer, she said she was very sorry, but there was not a bed to spare in the house, so many soldiers had brought billets, they were quite full. I drew my hand across my brows, looked at my feet, rather feelingly, and requesting she would serve me with a pint of ale, I sat down. The ale was brought, and I gave it a hearty pull, and then asked for a pipe and tobacco, which were placed before me. My next order was for something to eat, intimating that a chop or a steak, with a hot potato, would be preferred. Meantime, I drank up my ale and called for another pint, and sat smoking and chatting with the farmers quite in a comfortable way. When they heard I came from Lancashire they made many inquiries as to late events and present prospects, and I told them all they required so far as my information went, and as candidly and fairly as my judgment enabled me, and we became very agreeable company. When my supper was brought in I dispatched it with a hearty relish, and then, having ordered some brandy and water, I called the landlady to receive my shot, observing that it was time I should look out for lodgings - for I wished to try what fair means would do first. 'Oh!' she said, 'make yourself comfortable, young man; you seem to be very good com-

pany, and we'll make you a bed somehow or other, you shall see.' 'Another glass, sir, did you say?' asked the maid, who stood at her mistress's elbow. I nodded assent, and thus got installed for the night, and had a most excellent lodging.

"I have been the more circumstantial in narrating this transaction, inasmuch as it contains a useful intimation to foot travellers. I have never since, save on two occasions, tried the experiment of getting lodgings at a public-house in the way I put the question on this night, and on those occasions I took the plan more from curiosity than any other motive. A foot traveller, if he is really desirous to obtain lodgings, should never stand asking about them. He should walk into a good room—never into the common tap-room—put his dusty feet under a table, ring the bell pretty smartly, and order something to eat and drink, and not speak in the humblest of tones. He will be served quickly and respectfully—that is, if those two things happen to be understood at the house. After his repast he should take his pipe or cigar if he be a smoker, and whether he be or not, he should drink, chat, and make himself quite at ease until bed-time, when all he has to do will be to call the chambermaid and ask her to light him to bed. That will be done as a matter of course, and he will probably have saved himself a tramp round the town in search of lodgings, and probably, after all, the making of his own bed under a manger or in a hay-loft.

"At six o'clock the following morning, the

weather still delightful, I left Northampton. With feelings of veneration I stopped to admire the fine old cross, as it is called, erected on the spot where the body of Eleanor, Queen of Edward I., rested on its way to London. Near this place, as I was informed by a finger-post, the road to Needwood Forest diverged, and I longed for an opportunity to range through these interesting haunts of our English yeomen of old, but my imaginative wanderings were soon checked by the information which a countryman gave me, that the forest lands were nearly all enclosed.

"At a little quiet, retired public-house on the Northampton side of Stoke Goldington I stopped for breakfast. I chose to halt here for two reasons: the first, because I wished to pay my respects to a worthy old couple, if they were still living, and the second, because I had walked about eleven miles, and was hungry. When, in my nineteenth year, I was absconding from a ship at London, weary, exhausted, and anxious lest I should be pressed, I called at nightfall at this public-house, then kept by a decent elderly man and his wife with several children. I was in my sailor's dress, with but little money in my pocket, and I told the good folks my situation. They could not find me a bed in the house, but they took pity on me, and shook me down some good clean straw in an out-building, where, with the ducks for my companions in one corner, and the fowls in the other, I spent a night of sleep that might have blessed a king. The kind people also

gave me a breakfast of milk and bread in the morning, and when very gratefully and willingly I offered payment, they refused to receive anything. I could not therefore pass their door without calling to thank them, but I found them not there; they were both, I believe, dead, and the people now at the house knew nothing about the circumstance which had made me a debtor to their predecessors.

"Whilst I sat enjoying my repast, a portly, country-looking personage, with an air of some authority, came into the kitchen where several others were. He was followed by a neatly and plainly attired young woman, who sat down at a respectful distance, and seemed to shun observation. I soon learned from the tenor of his conversation with the landlord that he was a kind of deputy-constable in some of the neighbouring townships, and that the young woman was going with him before a magistrate, on a charge which would send her to prison, for having become a mother without producing a legitimate father for her offspring. This was enough to interest me in behalf of the girl, even had not the coarse jokes of the constable and one or two others excited my disgust and strong aversion. I once or twice put in a word of a civil and rather exculpatory tendency, for which I almost got laughed at by the men, but was repaid by the modest and grateful looks of the poor girl. The son of the squire's coachman had, as I understood, been courting the damsel two or three years, but

when she was in a way for bringing a charge upon him, he had nearly ceased visiting her, and had entirely given over talking about marriage. These circumstances, which to the young woman must be matters of deep affliction and shame, were to the country boors subjects for scornful and bitter joking, all of which she bore very meekly and, what made me think better of her, with a good sense and self-respectful manner which prevented her from making the least reply. She sat with her head not entirely downcast, but with an air of shame, indignation, and repentance, whilst blushes, paleness, and tears were alternately visible on her cheeks. I ardently wished for an opportunity for getting her out of the hands of these ruffians, and particularly of the one who had charge of her, and as I had learned the constable and she were going my way, I determined to avail myself of any chance for that purpose. I therefore fell to cultivating a good opinion with the functionary; I gave him some tobacco, and my glass to drink from, and in a short time he was telling about the numerous perils he had gone through in his apprehension of thieves, poachers, and trespassers; on the sound judgment his office required, and the courage and activity he had on sundry occasions displayed, whilst I wondered how so rare a constable could have remained so long in a humble country situation. At length he must go, and as he said he should be glad of my company as far as we went, we all three left the public-house.

"We had not got far ere a young fellow, apparently a farm labourer, climbed over a stile from the fields and joined us. He was going to a doctor, he said, having had his face, some weeks before, injured by a young colt kicking him. His head and features were bandaged so that none of them were visible save his eyes and part of his nose. He walked with us, saying very little, but occasionally sighing, as it were from pain. I observed the young woman glancing rather doubtfully towards him once or twice, but neither she nor the constable seemed to know him. After walking some distance the constable said he had to turn off across the fields to a village. He said I might as well go that way, as the foot-road led into the highway again, and was short, and there was an excellent tap at the alehouse, where we could have a glass after his business was done. I agreed, for I wanted to see something more of this affair, and so I stepped with him, his prisoner and the young man into the meadow path—for the doctor also lived in the same village. We soon arrived at the little hamlet, and the constable inquired of a servant in livery if 'his worship was at home?' He said he was, and would be down-stairs in half an hour, and if he called then he would see him. We stepped into a public-house, where we ordered some ale, and having found it very good, we began to smoke, having agreed, very philosophically, that it was the wisest course to 'take things easy in this world.' We had sat thus, blowing clouds for some time, and going on

our second jug, when the young fellow came suddenly into the room, and, gazing wildly, said a person was killed just above, and the doctor had sent him for a constable, as they could not remove the body until one arrived. Our active officer then, potent with ale and authority, laid down his pipe, pulled out his staff, took a huge draught, and charging me with the custody of the young woman until he returned, he hurried out of the house. As soon as he had disappeared, ‘here,’ I said to the girl, ‘take that shilling, and run for thy life.’ The young fellow at the same time pulled his bandages from his face; a scream burst from the girl, he laid hold of her arm, I turned to light my pipe, and the next instant they had disappeared.

“I then hastened up the lane in search of my active coadjutor, and met him coming down swearing and brandishing his truncheon. ‘Where are they?’ I said, for I thought I would be first to speak. ‘Where are who?’ he asked. ‘Why, the young Jezebel and that fellow with the broken face?’ ‘Where are they?’ he repeated, glaring on me with his two eyes as if they would have started from his head. ‘Where are they indeed?’ ‘You should know where one is at least.’ I then told him in a somewhat deprecatory tone that I only turned to the fire to light my pipe, and when I looked again both the prisoner and the young fellow were gone. ‘But you are not gone at any rate,’ he replied, ‘nor shall you go until you have been before the justice to answer for

this. 'Come along,' he said, 'come this way,' and laying hold of my arm he reconducted me to the public-house. 'Heigh ho!' I said, 'there's nothing like taking things easy in this world.' 'D—— you and your easiness,' he retorted, quite in a rage. 'John,' he said to the ostler, 'go and see if his worship is astir yet.' John went and soon returned with the tidings that his worship was ready. My conductor and I then went into the house of the worthy magistrate, and were met at the yard door by a set of very cross pointers and cock-dogs, who made a general assault as if they would have worried us, and myself in particular, for they seemed to have barked at my companion before. We were conducted into a neat carpeted room, where his worship and his clerk sat at a table covered with a green cloth, and with a number of papers and writing materials before them. 'Well, Andrew!' said the clerk, a thin, sallow, suspicious-eyed person, 'where is the girl you were to bring?' 'Lord bless his honour's worship,' said Andrew, 'I left her in the custody of this here man and he's let her run away.' 'How's that?' asked his worship, lifting his eyes from a Game Act which he had been perusing. 'How did you come to leave her in this man's charge? I thought you had been an older officer and had known better than that,' said his worship. 'May it please your honour's worship,' said the constable, 'I and the girl and this said prisoner, that now is, were awaiting your honour's pleasure in the public-house, when in comes a

scurvy knave as was awaiting o' the doctor, and said there was a person killed, and I must go and take charge of the corpse; so I 'livered my prisoner into this man's charge, and away I went arter the corpse; and when I had run up and down o' the village, I couldn't hear o' no corpse, and the people all, sir, a-laughing at me.'

"The clerk gave a dark and bitter frown, the magistrate burst out a-laughing heartily. I laughed too; in fact, I had been doing so in my mind during the last half-hour. When the clerk saw the magistrate laugh, he was suddenly taken with a like cheerful sensation, and we all three laughed at Andrew, the constable.

"'Well,' said the magistrate, composing himself, 'but what has this to do with the loss of your prisoner?'

"'Please your honour,' said the constable, 'before I went a-seeking the corpse I left the girl in charge of this man, who I believe is no better than he should be, and when I came back he tells me the girl had run away whilst he was a-lighting of his pipe.'

"'How was it?' asked the magistrate, addressing me. I gave him the same account I had given the constable, on which he first, and then the clerk, burst into a hearty fit of laughter, to the apparently sore puzzlement of the constable, who seemed to think it a subject of too grave a nature for such light entertainment.

"'What do you wish his worship to do in this case, Andrew?' asked the clerk.

“‘ I wish his honour would send this here man to jail instead of the girl,’ was the reply.

“‘ Can we do that?’ asked the magistrate, half serious, half joking.

“‘ We can hold him in sureties if Andrew undertakes to prefer a bill against him at the assizes,’ was the reply in the same strain.

“‘ Let it be done then,’ said his worship. ‘ Andrew, you will be bound in a bond of fifty pounds to prosecute this charge at the next assizes.’

“‘ Please your honour’s worship, I’d rather be excused,’ said Andrew, looking alarmed. ‘ Who’s to pay expenses?’

“‘ I rather think the prisoner won’t pay, at any rate,’ said his worship; ‘ those who prosecute will have the first chance of that.’

“‘ Then I couldn’t do it,’ said the constable; ‘ I’d rather not have any hand in the affair.’

“‘ Is the man to be discharged then?’ asked the magistrate.

“‘ Yes, if your honour pleases,’ said the constable; ‘ I don’t like them ’ere bonds.’

“The magistrate then asked me what I was and where I came from, and I told him I was a weaver and came from Lancashire.

“He asked me where I was going to and for what purpose, and I told him I was on my way to London in expectation of getting a place.

“Had I relatives in London, and what sort of a place did I expect to obtain? I said I had not any relatives in London, but I had some good

friends, and I had little doubt of getting a situation under Government.

"' Under Government,' said he, with surprise; the clerk also elevated his eyebrows.

"' Yes, sir,' said I, half laughing; 'I'm going up in expectation of a Government place.'

"' The man is *non compos*,' said the magistrate in an undertone.

"' Very likely, sir,' replied the clerk.

"' You are discharged, then,' said the magistrate. 'We can't do anything with you unless there be an undertaking to prosecute.'

"I bowed respectfully to his worship, gave the clerk a questionable smile, and quitting the room, I made the best of my way to the public-house, where I had left my bundle and stick.

"Another person had come in whilst we were away, and the landlady had told him about the girl running off and my being taken prisoner. This person was an attorney's clerk, and he took up my cause earnestly, and advised me to prosecute the constable for a false imprisonment. He was giving me that advice when the constable returned. I pretended to entertain the project, and when the official became aware of the subject on which we were deliberating, he became very uneasy, and seemed almost willing to make any compromise rather than be under the clutches of the other 'limb of the law.' At length, after I had sufficiently tormented him, I agreed to a settlement, the terms of which were that he should pay for a quantity of ale, I and the attorney's clerk,

whom I found to be a queer, ironical fellow, agreeing to pay for as much to come in after his was drunk.

“ We had sat here rather a considerable time, and had got into high good humour with each other and the liquor, when the sounds of voices and a fiddle were heard approaching the house, and in a minute after in walked the girl we had prisoner in the morning, arm in arm with a young fellow, who, by his speech and dress, we recognised as the one with the patched face; in short, they were the two runaways, followed by some half a dozen young men, two young women, and an elderly person fiddling. They had been at church and had got wed, the banns having been published there some months before. They were now all ready for dancing, singing, and mirth; I scarcely ever saw a set of happier-looking countenances; the lad was in raptures; the bride seemed to have more self-command than any in the place. She thanked me most gratefully for the kindly feelings I had evinced; her husband joined her, and I found it of no use offering to break up from the wedding party. The constable was quite reconciled, as the charge, he said, would be taken off the township, and the ratepayers would deem it no bad day’s work of his. The attorney offered his friendly services in reconciling the squire’s coachman to the match, and the landlady brought in a posset of spiced ale for the wedding feast. The fiddler rosined his bow afresh, and played up a jig that set all the lads a-capering. In short,

we ate and drank and danced the afternoon away. Evening followed, night came, and then the noon of night ; and the last scenes I committed to memory were the fiddler falling from his chair and smashing his viol, and the attorney painting the constable's face delicately with a blacking-brush whilst the latter person was fast asleep.

"The next morning I was at Newport Pagnell at an early hour. The place had a most romantic appearance as I approached it. There must have been heavy rains upwards, for the Ouse had overflowed its banks, and numerous cattle were grazing on small green islets surrounded by the flood. The weather continued all that a foot traveller could wish, and I walked on leisurely, enjoying the cooling breeze, the odour of flowers, and the music of birds some six or eight miles until I arrived at the celebrated village of Woburn, where I stepped into the first public-house I came to on the left-hand side—I think it was the sign of the 'Bedford Arms.' The place seemed very fine, and the people I saw moving about looked, I thought, in a strange supercilious way at me ; none of them stopped to ask what I wanted. At length I desired a woman to bring me a glass of ale, intending it as a preliminary to breakfast. She did not pause a moment to receive my order, but looking down, swept past me. 'Bless us,' I thought, 'what sort of a public-house have I got into now ?' No one attended to me, and soon after I asked again for a glass of ale ; this servant also went away without speaking, but in a short

time a female of a superior appearance came and said they did not entertain foot travellers. I expressed my surprise at that, and assured her I was both able and willing to pay for whatever I called for. She said she did not doubt it, but it was an invariable rule of the house not to serve persons travelling on foot, and the rule could not be departed from. Could I not have a draught of ale? I asked. No, foot travellers could not have anything there. I accordingly rose, and replacing my bundle on my shoulder, I begged her to inform her employer that the rule of the house might bring trouble and humiliation sometime, inasmuch as, if other engagements did not press me, I would go before the nearest magistrate or the Duke of Bedford himself, and prefer a complaint against the occupier for refusing to entertain a traveller without sufficient cause. She smiled at my law (as well she might, having scanned my appearance, and thence formed an opinion of my purse), and said there were other places in the village where I might have whatever refreshment I wanted; and then, probably thinking she had wasted time enough on me, she turned and walked off, and I came out of that inhospitable and pride-infected place. At another inn I met with a reception the very reverse of the first; the people, both landlord and servants, were very obliging and attentive. I made a good breakfast, rested, chatted, and received an invitation to call there again if I came that way.

“I wonder whether the people of the Duke’s

Arms are yet in business? and if they are, whether, like scores of their arrogant brotherhood, they have not been so far humbled by those great levellers, the railways, that if a wayfaring man now enters their house he can have a cup of ale for money?

"I walked to Redbourn to dinner, which consisted of a plain but delicious repast at a very humble pothouse. Here I remarked a horseshoe nailed inside the weather board of the door, and on my pretending ignorance of its purpose, and asking what it was for, an old wrinkled dame, seemingly the mother of the household, told me with perfect seriousness that it was to keep all witches and bewitched persons and things out of the place, and that so long as it remained there nothing under the influence of witchcraft could enter.

"At St. Albans I walked amid the ruins of the Old Abbey, having previously passed a fragment of a wall in the meadows below, undoubtedly a part of the remains of the British city of Verulam. I lingered rather long with these scenes, and it was getting dark when I passed the Obelisk at Barnet, where the famous battle was fought in the Wars of the Roses. Every step I advanced to-day, the people, their houses, and their manners, became more Londonish; and it will not then appear surprising that at the first public-house I went into I was made welcome to comfortable quarters, and so remained there during the night. The next morning I walked into London, and took my breakfast at a coffee-house."

XI

ISLINGTON is but a mile and a quarter from the General Post Office. Even eighty years ago it was only semi-rural. London, in fact, is really after all a slow-moving monster, and although there are, here and there, instances of swift extension, the Great City enlarges itself as a rule with elephantine deliberation. At Islington, in the heyday of the coaching era, you first experienced the sensation of being on the road to anywhere in particular; for there, on Islington Green, stood the first turnpike gates. On the hither side was London: once through them, and you were definitely in the country. As the illustration shows, characteristically urban streets of houses had then begun to appear, but the cocks and hens and the drove of sheep in the road present a rural appearance, and in the distance the church seems to stand amid rustic bowers.

Beyond the village of Islington lay the open road again, and travellers still, as they came to Ring Cross, spoke fearfully of the gibbet that had stood there, and hoped the memory of such things had not died out, nor ceased to be a warning to malefactors.

Ring Cross has long since disappeared from the map. It stood, according to such careful cartographers as John Rocque and his coadjutors in 1746, at a point three and a half miles from London, now to be identified with the junction



ISLINGTON GREEN, 1825.

of the Holloway Road and the Benwell and Hornsey Roads, which then, under the fearful name of "Devil's Lane," led to the remote hamlet of Crouch End.

The neighbourhood was of ill omen. There many a tattered body, slowly disintegrating, had hung in chains; most notable among them that of John Price, the hangman, who on May 31st, 1718, was himself hanged for robbing and murdering one Elizabeth White in Bunhill Fields, his body being afterwards suspended here. The horror of it was revived in 1827, when a skeleton with the gibbet-irons was found at "Catherine Street, near the main road, Holloway"; the gibbet and the remains being afterwards exhibited at the "Coach and Horses" public-house near by, perhaps to be identified with the house of that name now at 214, Holloway Road.

Highgate formed in those times another settled spot, where London citizens lived a rural life and cultivated the virtues and ruddy cheeks, amid villainously ill-reputed wastes to north and south. Finchley Common and its fringing Alsatisias stretched north, as far as that other civilised interval, Barnet; and through the great common of Finchley ran the road which all who travelled north must pass, as messieurs the highwaymen knew full well.

In days before any kind of coach travelled the road, it was the usual thing for a traveller to get astride his own horse and so, bumping in the saddle, to come to his destination. Others,

who, although owning no horses, had a good eye for horseflesh and were good at a bargain, would often purchase a mount and at the end of a long journey sell him to advantage. It was one of these travellers who, having bought a fine horse in London at a very moderate price, found when he had come to Finchley Common that he had acquired a very singular bargain indeed. Riding across the lonely waste, he saw another horseman advancing; whereupon his own horse, in the most curious manner, edged up to the stranger and pushed in so threatening a way against him that he, with every sign of fear, handed over his purse. The horse had obviously been the property of a highwayman.

The Manchester Mail changed horses at the "Old White Lion," Finchley, as the print after James Pollard shows; and whether or not Pollard intended to convey any such idea, it looks distinctly a hostelry and a neighbourhood in which it would not be prudent for a stranger with much money about him to linger long after the mail had duly changed and driven off. What an astonishing change is that which has now come upon the scene!

Change, in fact, looms large upon the home stretches of the road, and even Barnet Fair is threatened with extinction. Threatened men and threatened institutions live long, but at last some one or something puts a period to their existence; and they are in the end, when people have almost come to consider them immortal,

[After James Pollard.

THE MANCHESTER MAIL CHANGING HORSES AT THE "OLD WHITE LION," FINCHLEY, 1835.



cut off with suddenness. Barnet Fair will doubtless in the near future follow most other fairs into the past tense; but meanwhile, although considered moribund by many, it is without doubt extremely lively. And it is just this lusty liveliness that will, paradoxically, cause its abolition; for the crowds of horse-dealers, and East-End and low-life Londoners in general, who are attracted to it for its annual three days, commencing on the first Monday in September, are not favourably regarded by the "residential" classes of Barnet and the district; although the tradespeople seem to look upon them with tolerably friendly eyes. Opinions are divided, as they must needs be when such opposite ideals of life prevail. The "residents" want peace and quietness: the tradespeople want trade, and they apparently have the ear of the vestry, which so long since as 1888 passed a resolution that as the fair at that time brought over 20,000 people into the district and was the means of some £10,000 to £12,000 being spent there, it would be a great hardship to the commercial classes in Barnet if it were abolished. A memorial was presented to the then Home Secretary praying that the fair should be continued, and the petition proved successful.

"Improvements" have not been lacking of late in Barnet. That they are improvements admits of no doubt, for they have caused the widening of the roadway at a narrow point, and have disclosed the noble parish church to view,

It was built in at its eastern end, at some bygone period, with a quaint old house and shop; a picturesque jumble, and one which has, to some, left an aching void in its disappearance. This odd excrescence was an old-world baker's shop, with carpenter-Gothic stuccoed little house above:



MONKEN HADLEY CHURCH.

not (as may be gathered) admirable for the purity of its style. Like the fly in amber, it was neither rich nor rare, but one speculated on what brought it in such a strange conjunction, built on to the end of the church in such a manner that the uninstructed stranger was at a loss to tell where the ecclesiastical building ended and the merely secular one began.

Barnet has been already fully treated of in the pages of the GREAT NORTH ROAD and the HOLYHEAD ROAD, and there remains little else to say of it; but it, among other places, cherishes the diverting story of the postmaster's wife handing out her husband's leathern breeches from the bedroom window to the up night mail, instead of the postal bags. The guard did not discover the mistake until Highgate was reached, when he returned on horseback to exchange the wearing apparel for His Majesty's mails.

The mail-bags themselves were once stolen here. The incident happened in February, 1810, whiles the horses were being changed. Thieves made off with the bags for places from Hatfield to Grantham, and thence to Spilsby and Boston, and although the notice issued on March 1st by the Postmaster-General offered a reward of one hundred pounds for the apprehension of the robber, no one was ever captured, nor did the bags ever reappear.

XII

A WEIRD place-name, prominent upon the signposts along the road, irresistibly invites to a further exploration. "To Cockfosters," says the signposts. Certainly, by all means. You cannot choose but go to see what manner of place this may be; but after all—as in countless other instances—nothing so very remarkable meets the explorer's gaze. It is, in fact, a little woodland

hamlet on the borders of the three parishes of Hadley, East Barnet, and Enfield ; and the name, in the lack of any actual evidence, is presumed to derive from the ancient French phrase, *Bicoque forestière*, a little settlement amid unenclosed forest land.

More meets the eye at Monken Hadley, a village not yet overwhelmed by the suburban tide. The centre of local interest is, of course, as usual, in the church, and the interest of the church itself is centred on the tower.



THE FIRE-POT, MONKEN HADLEY.

Monken Hadley church is, of course, the fire-pot, or beacon, which arouses such speculation on the part of strangers at a distance.

How far back such a beacon existed on this, or any earlier, tower-turret here must remain uncertain ; but its purpose is plain enough. The light of it was intended to guide travellers be-

The date of the tall tower is readily fixed by the quaint arabic figures over the doorway, which, deciphered, give the year 1494. But the great curiosity of

nighted in the once dense and far-spreading Enfield Chase. The elevated site of the church itself was known as "Beacon Hill" in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and even then had long borne that name. There is evidence that the beacon was lighted in the troubled times of 1745, when the Scottish rebels were hourly expected to descend upon London and replace King George with a Stuart sovereign. Blown down in the great gale of January 1st, 1779, the existing one is, of course, merely a restoration. It was lighted on the night of the rejoicings over the Diamond Jubilee in 1897, and again at the Coronation of Edward the Seventh.

The Battle of Barnet, in which Monken Hadley and all the surrounding district were involved, is an oft-told tale, and romantic novelists have long had their way with it. Lord Lytton was probably the last, as he was certainly the greatest, to make that great contest of 1471 the vehicle for a story ; and he wrote of it so convincingly that an ancient and weatherbeaten fragment of a huge oak tree marking the border of Enfield Chase is pointed out as a legitimate historic landmark of that great contest. It is the "gaunt and leafless tree" whereon Friar Bungay hangs his hated rival, Adam Warner, whilst at its foot lay the lifeless form of his daughter Sibyll and "the shattered fragments of the mechanical 'eureka' on which he had spent the labours of his life."

The old trunk, long ago divested of its bark, was upset some years ago by some drunken volun-

teers, but it has been replaced in its original position and enclosed within a railing.

Taking by preference the old road, across Hadley Green, by the obelisk, called "Hadley Highstone," marking the site of the battle, instead of following the "new" road out of Barnet constructed by Telford in 1823, we pass Dyrham Park. The imposing stone-built entrance to this



THE GATEWAY, DYRHAM PARK.

beautiful domain is sufficient to attract attention by itself, without the aid of historic association ; but it has, according to oft-repeated story, the added interest of having originally been a triumphal arch erected in London to welcome Charles the Second, at his Restoration in 1660.

The old road comes to a junction again with the new at South Mimms, and old and new proceed together from this point to St. Albans, up Ridge

Hill, and so by London Colney. Here and there stretches of the old way may be found, to right or left; hollow, overshadowed by trees, and solitary, save for those expertest of expert wayfarers, the gipsies and the tramps, who may often be found there, under the greenwood tree, secure from the dust and the hustling of this new century which has discovered the roads again, but has not the time nor the inclination to know them intimately, or as anything else than a race-track.

In 1826, seventy-two coaches passed through St. Albans every twenty-four hours, and it was calculated that the travellers passing through in the same time numbered no fewer than 1,000, of whom the coaches conveyed 600. The rest were those at the extremes of poverty and wealth, who rode in the waggons or walked; or sped by swiftly and luxuriously, in post-chaises or in their own private chariots. How many, one wonders, are the motor-cars that now daily speed, in clouds of dust, up Ridge Hill and so through London Colney and St. Albans to North Wales, or to Manchester and then, across the Border, into Scotland?

The streets of St. Albans are by no means adapted for the hurrying methods of to-day; and although the town—or the city, as we must now style it—is but twenty-one miles from the centre of London, it is even yet a place of narrow and winding ways. There is, indeed, to this day a certain savour of monasticism about St. Albans, largely though the place has grown of late

years. The Abbey, on its crowning ridge, of course dominates everything; but, apart from that chief feature, you have old churches, old houses of every degree of antiquity down to the time of George the Third (after which period houses cease to be antique), and old inns. And with all these evidences of a venerable age there is yet a lively air, a bustling cheeriness, about St. Albans that render it really lovable. Much might be said of St. Albans: of the ruins of Sopwell nunnery, down in the quelchy watermeadows as you come in from London; of St. Stephen's, the tiny village on its height, looking down upon the city; of the ancient Abbey Gatehouse, proudly known as "the oldest school in England." Indeed, something must needs be said of this last. It stands immediately by the West Front of the Abbey, and is the last relic of the vanished monastery.

The Gatehouse is only by chance the Grammar School, for the school, itself founded about the year 1095 by the monks, was only removed hither in 1869. After the suppression of the Abbey and the demolition of most of its domestic buildings, the Gatehouse became the Sessions House and prison for St. Albans until 1651. Thenceforward, until 1869, it served the not dissimilar purpose of a House of Correction. Indeed, throughout its history, from the building of it in 1380, the great Gatehouse has served like purposes: the stewards of my lords abbots having held assize in the upper rooms and censigned offenders to the

dungeons below. Offenders were many, for those ancient Churchmen, who lorded it autocratically over St. Albans, in temporalities as well as in spiritual matters, obtruded into all things. They were, as already shown, for education, and at an



THE "FLEUR DE LIS."

extraordinarily early period established the Grammar School: but they took care to excommunicate every other school in the neighbourhood, and none might buy nor sell, nor hold any privileges of market without the Church took toll of them. That there were those who, even in early days,

kicked against the pricks of this combined jurisdiction over body and soul duly appears in the records of St. Albans; and they suffered in the Gatehouse the penalties awarded to all fire-brands, malcontents, and agitators, and all such pestiferous fellows. Wherefore the grey old building is a very interesting old relic indeed of those times which certain parties in the State (who ought properly to be flogged at the cart-tail) are eager to bring back.

Of the inns of St. Albans I shall say little in this place, for much has been said of them in the pages of the *HOLYHEAD ROAD* and the *GREAT NORTH ROAD*. But a word or two, and a sketch, must be reserved for the “*Fleur de Lis*” inn, close by the Market Place. Like Canning’s “*Needy Knife-Grinder*” it has no story to tell, but its courtyard, with the odd little external staircase shown here, sufficiently justifies notice, even though in history, national or local, the house has no place. An effective item in the view—the object resembling a church-tower—is entirely extrinsic. It has nothing to do with the inn, except serving the purpose of composing a picture; nor is it even strictly ecclesiastical, being a fourteenth-century curfew-tower, once of remarkable interest, but shorn of much of that quality after Sir Gilbert Scott laid his heavy restoring hand on it, some forty years ago.

XIII

THE Cathedral of St. Albans, as it must now be called, for the ancient Abbey became the Cathedral Church of a new diocese in 1875, was said by Freeman to be "the vastest of English ministers." He was not quite correct, for the huge Cathedral of Winchester is ten feet longer; but the bold and elevated site on which St. Albans stands advertises its bulk in the supremest degree, while the site of Winchester Cathedral, being flat, and its precincts enclosed, the dimensions of that most interesting of all English Cathedrals are not fully displayed.

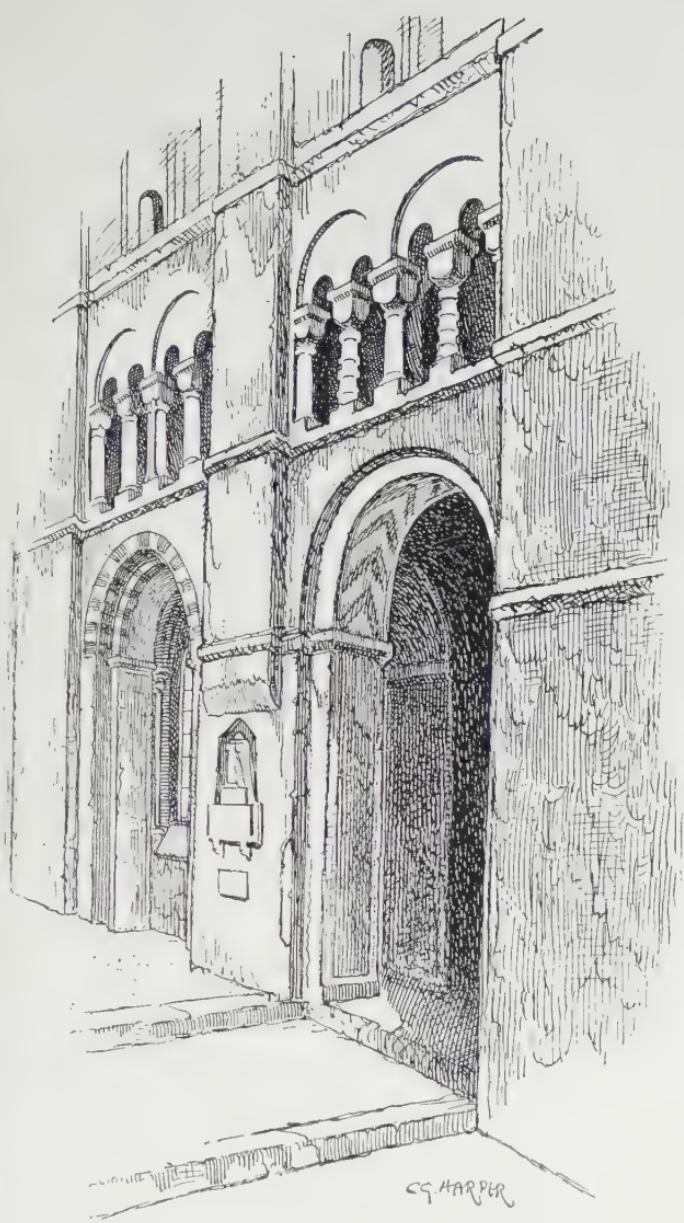
The reasons that impelled the first architects of St. Albans Abbey to so greatly distinguish their church, for size, above all others, are found in the fact that it was here that St. Alban, the first British martyr, suffered, in the dim era of the Diocletian persecution, in the Roman domination of Britain. "This year," says the Saxon Chronicle, referring to A.D. 283, "suffered St. Alban the Martyr," but Bede, in his "Ecclesiastical History," places the date at A.D. 305, and as the death of St. Alban was a direct result of the savagaries instituted by Diocletian, decreed two years earlier by that tyrant, the historian is probably correct.

Bede died in A.D. 735, four hundred and thirty years after the event he recorded. He and the even earlier chronicler, Gildas, who wrote in A.D. 564, mention a church of sorts being very

early built upon the site of the martyrdom ; but all earlier buildings were swept away on the coming of the Normans, and already in 1077, only eleven years after the Conquest, Abbot Paul de Caen had cleared the ground and began the immense building of which the existing Cathedral is the representative, still retaining large portions of his work ; including the tower, transepts and choir, nine bays on the north side of the nave and three on the south.

There was at that time no spot even distantly approaching the especial holiness of this, and none could have foreseen the tragedy at Canterbury in 1170, that was, in little less than one hundred years, to completely overshadow St. Alban and set the Blessed St. Thomas à Becket above him.

Abbot Paul's great building was imposing, but it was not beautiful. What is left of his original work has become venerable through age, but there can be no doubt that, could we see it in all its freshness, as it was built, we should consider it very gaunt and ugly indeed. He antedated the typical American in his desire to "lick creation," and he thought in feet and yards, rather than in terms of beauty. There was much to provoke him to this. He had the relics of the then holiest indigenous martyr, and those of St. Amphibalus, scarcely less holy, in his charge, and ready to his hand lay huge piles of building materials, the bricks, tiles, and stones of the ruined Roman city of *Verulamium*, that



RELICS OF THE SAXON CHURCH IN THE NORTH TRANSEPT,
ST. ALBANS.

had stood in the valley. The bulk of these materials was formed of tiles, and with these the abbot reared his walls and piers, and the central tower; bedding the tiles in mortar as thick as themselves: so that to modern observers it seems remarkable that, with such a pudding-like mass as this must have been before it dried out, the walls ever consented to stand upright. Some few ornamental features were incorporated from the Saxon church built by Offa, King of the Mercians, in A.D. 793. These are the celebrated balusters, of undoubted Saxon character, which, fitted with Norman capitals and bases, serve as columns in the triforia of the transepts.

Abbot Paul's building was of the most stark and naked early Norman character. He willingly forswore ornament, if he could thereby add another bay to the length of his Abbey Church, and he and the mid-nineteenth-century builders join hands, in the spirit, across the tremendous gap of seven centuries and a half. Both delighted in plaster, and both hated to show the real materials of which they built. Abbot Paul covered the entire exterior of his Abbey, as well as the interior, from east to west, and up to the topmost battlements of his central tower, with plaster, thick and slab, and thought the result beautiful. And so did his contemporaries. We may take leave to look with a considerable measure of contempt upon their taste. Traces of the plaster facing of the tower, indeed, remained until 1870, when, in course of restoration works,

it was removed, revealing the beautiful dark red hue of the Roman tiles of which it is constructed.

The proverb that “the old order changeth, giving place to new,” is most strikingly emphasised in the appearance and history of any great Cathedral. Each successive abbot seems here, as elsewhere, to have desired to do something much better than that done by his predecessors ; and so we find Abbot John de Cella, in 1195, with the particularly inadequate sum of one hundred marks left for the purpose by the last abbot, beginning to rebuild Abbot Paul’s gigantic church. De Cella was a supreme artist, but unhappily an idealist who did not count the cost of what he was doing. He pulled down the West Front, and began to rebuild it in the Early English style. Before he had done more than get in the foundations of his new work, bang went the hundred marks, with much else : a circumstance which led the historian, Matthew de Paris, to gibe cruelly at him ; saying, very caustically, he wondered the abbot had not recollected the ancient proverb,—“That he who is about to build should compute the cost, lest all begin to jeer at him, saying, ‘This man *began* to build, and was unable to finish it.’”

How de Cella tried in every direction to raise money for his works is a pitiful story : how he visited, travelled, petitioned, and begged, first of one person, and then of another ; how he was “looked coldly upon” and snubbed. Finally,

after a great number of years, during which the works were only spasmodically in progress, de Cella died, in 1214, with the porches of his West Front only half finished.

The Early English architecture of de Cella remained, a lovely specimen of the artistic feeling of the period, until 1882, when Lord Grimthorpe destroyed it, on the excuse that it was decayed and could not be made good by modern workmen : building a West Front of his own, in a style which has justly been called “Dissenting Gothic.”

William de Trumpington succeeded de Cella as abbot, and in his one-and-twenty years rebuilt four bays on the north side of the nave and five on the south, in the Early English style. Five others on the south side are of the Decorated period, and are the work of Abbot Eversden, in the fourteenth century. The remainder of the nave is the original gaunt early Norman.

It would be a lengthy treatise that should duly tell the architectural and other history of St. Albans Cathedral : and this is not the place for so prolonged an exercise. Let it be sufficient, then, to tell something of the things done to the fabric in modern times, in the name of “restoration.”

Celia Fiennes wrote, over two hundred years ago, that the “great Church w^{ch} is dedicated to St. Albans is much out of repaire. I see the places in the pavement hat was worn like holes for kneeling by the devotes of y^e Religion and his votery’s as they tell you, but the whole

Church is so worn away that it mourns for some Charitable person to help repaire it." That person was forthcoming in the fulness of time, in that ferocious controversialist and amateur architect, Lord Grimthorpe, who "restored" the Cathedral at his own expense. As a result, it mourns, and others mourn for it, more than ever. Enormous sums of money have been expended upon the vast building, amounting to over £160,000. Of this amount £40,000, raised by public subscription, went upon the works executed between 1870 and 1879. The remaining £120,000 or more was spent by Lord Grimthorpe in playing at being an architect.

The Abbey had, indeed, been gradually falling into decay for many years, and, about the middle of the nineteenth century, had at last become quite ruinous. In 1833, some reparations had been made to the tower, but these were slight, and work was only seriously begun in 1856, following a faculty granted to a committee which, calling itself "national," was nevertheless impotent to raise more than £30,000. Some slight accretions were made to this fund as the result of the added interest upon the Abbey being made the Cathedral Church of a new diocese, in 1875; but these were soon engulfed in the mere work of securing the sinking foundations. Sir Gilbert Scott was then called in to undertake the work, and instantly shored up the great tower, then on the point of falling. Until 1833, it had been crowned with a dwarf timber and leaden spire,

but this had been removed, and the ring of eight bells had, three years earlier, been silenced, for fear of bringing the heavy mass down. Great cracks had appeared in the walls of the transepts, being slowly ground to powder by the settling of the tower, and the interior of the building was always filled with an impalpable dust, from the same cause. Still the tower sank slowly, and it was seen that the four great piers at the crossing, which had hitherto supported it, were at last failing. The real marvel was that they had not failed before, for a singular discovery was made at this time, at the base of the south-west pier, by which it was proved that at some distant period—probably about that of the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII.—an attempt had been made to wreck the place. A kind of cavern, some six feet wide, had been excavated in the foundation and strutted with timbering which had evidently been placed there for the two-fold purpose of protecting the excavators, and of firing it when the undermining process had been completed. Why this brutal idea had been abandoned, when so near completion, must be left to conjecture; but it is plain to see that in all those centuries the congregations and visitors to the Abbey had been in danger, at any moment, of being crushed to death by a possible sudden collapse of the tower.

This injury was repaired, and new foundations were laid, down to the solid chalk, and the upper parts of the tower were secured. Funds at that

time permitted of little else being done. In 1871, an appeal for £50,000 was issued, resulting in a subscription of about £21,000; and in 1875, a further appeal for £30,000. Then the clerestory began to fall. A new faculty was granted, and more subscriptions came in, but by 1879 all these funds were again exhausted, and the restoration committee resigned. Then came the great opportunity which Lord Grimthorpe had long desired, of getting the restoration entirely into his own hands. He was an incredibly wealthy man,¹ with a passion for exercising the part of amateur architect, and an equal passion for controversy. He procured a new faculty, granting him unlimited power at his own expense, to "restore, repair, and refit the Church." Thus, disastrously for antiquity, was the old building made over to him, without let or hindrance, to do as he would.

The handiwork of Lord Grimthorpe is writ large, all over the building. He did the most extraordinary things. In restoring the transepts he put in what purported to be "Early English lancets," with false heads that look like genuine heads from without, but from within are seen to be cut off square; and was so enamoured of the red Roman tiles that give so noble an appearance to the exterior that, in rebuilding the walls, he supplied the lack of genuine ones for the new work by especially manufacturing "Roman" tiles of his own, to form the walls of the south

¹ Died April 27th, 1905. Will proved, October, 1905, for £1,562,500.

transept; designed in what has been very fitly styled “Railway-station Gothic.”

It would be wearisome to follow Lord Grimthorpe in detail, in his new way with an old Abbey. With extraordinary passion and virulent contempt for public opinion, he swept away genuine Norman work, and in many places gave a brand-new appearance where had before been



LORD GRIMTHORPE.

the bloom of antiquity. Controversy followed upon controversy, during the progress of these works, and Lord Grimthorpe went grimly on his way, replying to arguments with the personal abuse of which he was a better master than he was of architecture. His critics were “the usual howlers”; Street to him was “the immortal author of the worst great Gothic building in the world,” by which, of course, he meant the Law Courts; the foremost architects and antiquaries

talked "ignorant nonsense," and were persons who would "call everything destruction on which they have not got a percentage." Here, indeed, be "words that sting, and thoughts that burn." They are vehement, and they hurt, which was the object of them. Like Alan Breck, he was a "bonnie fighter," even though, as an architect, he did not begin to exist. One of his worst atrocities was the hateful wash-tub done in stone, which serves for pulpit in the nave.

His work is, indeed, only too evident all over the building, and he himself is represented in sculptured stone in a spandrel over one of the western porches; and is shown in the likeness of a recording angel, with a pen and a scroll upon which he is probably entering the sins of architects, or writing some new Evangel on matters architectural. But the sculptor, although the portrait is excellent, has made a mistake in representing him apparently at a loss for a word. Whether pleading a case in court, or abusing fellow-controversialists, his eloquence suffered from no such impediment.

But enough of Lord Grimthorpe and his doings. Let us see the "holy of holies" of this Cathedral : the Shrine of St. Alban, in its beautiful chapel, directly east of the great altar-screen. After the Shrine was destroyed, in the troubles attendant upon the Reformation, none expected it to be ever seen again. It disappeared utterly, and only the worn pavement, where the pilgrims had knelt, showed where it had stood. All around were signs

that this had been no lightly regarded Shrine; and to this day the mid-fifteenth-century Watching Loft remains, in which the Feretrarius, or Relic Keeper, and his monastic brethren kept guard night and day.

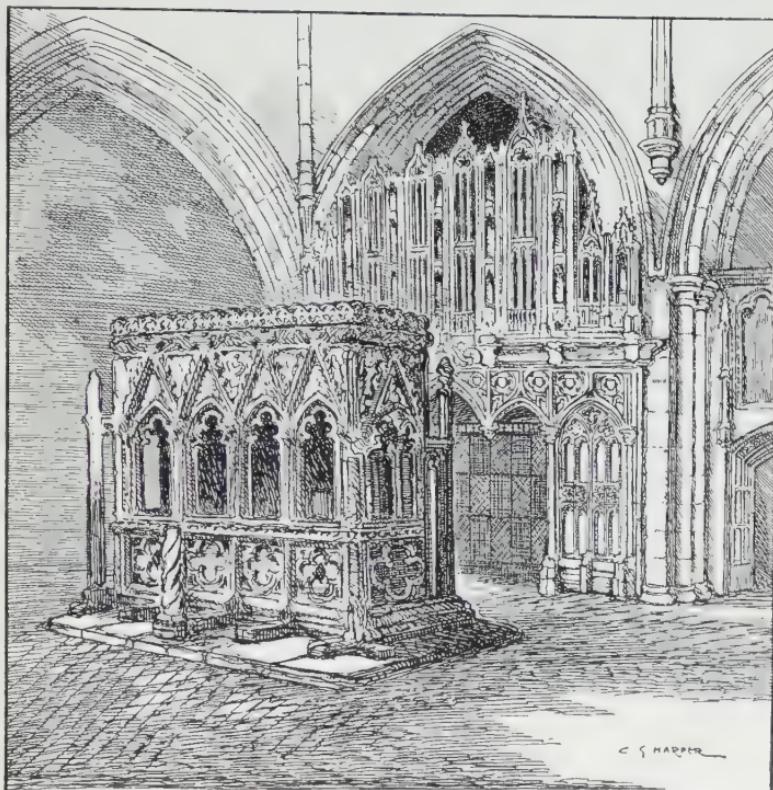
It was in 1866 that, during some alterations to the Lady Chapel, many pieces of carved Purbeck marble were found, built up with bricks and rubble into some sixteenth-century work. It was readily guessed that they were portions of the vanished Shrine, and in 1872, when Sir Gilbert Scott was at work in the south choir-aisle, an immense quantity of carved fragments were discovered. A further quest led to the recovery of nearly the whole of the marble Shrine; and it now stands, pieced together, in its ancient place.

The carved work of this strangely found relic is particularly beautiful, and includes groups representing the beheading of St. Alban and the scourging of St. Amphibalus. The cresting of the structure is of the most ornate character.

All this elaborate work was, however, but the support for the actual reliquary, the casket containing the relics of the Saint, which was gorgeous in silver and gold, and blazing with jewels. This was too precious a sight to be on view every day, and was covered at most times with an "operculum," which could be raised or lowered at will by means of cords or pulleys. On special high days and holy days it was displayed to view. The twisted shaft seen outside the Shrine is a fragment of the six that formerly supported the

six wax lights kept burning on those special days.

The Shrine of St. Amphibalus was discovered in a similar manner, and was also pieced together



SHRINE OF ST. ALBAN, AND TOMB OF DUKE HUMPHREY.

in the same way. It stands now in a darkling corner of the North Choir Aisle. There have been sceptical antiquaries daring enough to suggest that Amphibalus, the persecuted Christian who was secreted by Alban, with the result that both were martyred, is a myth. No such person, they

contend, ever existed. “Amphibalus,” it seems, was really the name of a kind of long cloak worn at that period; and such a cloak was worn by Alban when he was taken to execution. Monkish legends personified it, and it was, thus marvellously changed from an article of clothing into a human being, at length canonized. It is a little shocking to find old clothes admitted into the hierarchy of saints, and considerably lessens the very slight modicum of respect one might entertain for monastic lore.

XIV

If the following story, told by John Wesley in his Diary of 1769, is correct, some people must have queer tastes, and strange stomachs :

“*2nd Aug.*—Some friends from London met us at St. Albans. Before dinner we took a walk in the Abbey, one of the most ancient buildings in the kingdom, near a thousand years old; and one of the largest, being 560 feet in length¹ (considerably more than Westminster Abbey) and broad and high in proportion. Near the east end is the tomb and vault of good Duke Humphrey. Some, now living, remember since his body was entire; but after the coffin was opened, so many were anxious to taste the liquor in which it was preserved, that in a little time the corpse was left bare, and soonmouldered away. A few bones are now all that remain.”

¹ Wesley is wrong in his measurement. The length is 550 feet.

The Duke Humphrey referred to was Humphrey Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, uncle to Henry the Sixth, who was renowned for his hospitality, and commonly called "The good Duke Humphrey."

The "goodness" of Duke Humphrey must be, at the very least, an historic doubt. Born in 1391, the youngest son of Henry the Fourth, he was a man of affable and easy manners, cultured, and a patron of literature, and considered by the people a patriot. Those were the days when to be a "patriot" with one party was to be a "traitor" with another, and jealousy on the part of Queen Margaret, consort of his nephew, Henry the Sixth, caused his arrest at Bury St. Edmunds in 1447. The day after his arrest, the Duke died, not without suspicion of foul play; the times being such that the sudden death of any prominent person could never be put down to natural causes; which sufficiently shows the uncomfortable nature of those times. It seems, however, clear that he died from paralysis, brought on through a life of debauchery, and hastened by the shock of his arrest; but, if we may judge by the temper of the age, his death happened in time to prevent the political murder that assuredly would have been committed.

So much for the "goodness" of the "good Duke," who, whatever his morals, was, if we are to believe the story told of him by Sir Thomas More, a good deal more keen-witted than most people. It seems that he completely exposed an impostor who claimed to have been born blind,

but to have recovered his sight at the shrine of St. Alban. The Duke asked him the colours of the clothes himself and his suite were wearing, and they were readily given by the man, who did not perceive that, had he been born blind, he could not possibly know the names of colours. The answer exposed him, and he was put in the stocks. The story was long a favourite one at St. Albans, and forms a scene in the second part of *King Henry the Sixth*; and by the same token fortifies many in the belief that Bacon, and not Shakespeare, wrote that play.

Enter a Townsman of St. Albans, crying, "A miracle!"

Gloucester. What means this noise?

Fellow, what miracle dost thou proclaim?

Towns. A miracle! a miracle!

Suffolk. Come to the king and tell him what miracle.

Towns. Forsooth, a blind man at St. Alban's shrine, Within this half hour, hath received his sight; A man that ne'er saw in his life before.

K. Henry. Now, God be praised, that to believing souls Gives light in darkness, comfort in despair!

Enter the Mayor of St. Albans and his brethren, bearing Simpcox, between two in a chair; SIMPCOX'S Wife following.

Cardinal. Here comes the townsmen on procession, To present your highness with the man.

K. Hen. Great is his comfort in this earthly vale, Although by his sight his sin be multiplied.

Glo. Stand by, my masters: bring him near the king; His highness' pleasure is to talk with him.

K. Hen. Good fellow, tell us here the circumstance, That we for thee may glorify the Lord. What, hast thou been long blind and now restored?

Simpcox. Born blind, an't please your grace.

Wife. Ay, indeed, was he.

Suf. What woman is this?

Wife. His wife, an't like your worship.

Glo. Hadst thou been his mother, thou couldst have better told.

K. Hen. Where wert thou born?

Simp. At Berwick in the north, an't like your grace.

K. Hen. Poor soul, God's goodness hath been great to thee:

Let never day nor night unhallow'd pass,
But still remember what the Lord hath done.

Q. Margaret. Tell me, good fellow, camest thou here by chance,

Or of devotion, to this holy shrine?

Simp. God knows, of pure devotion; being call'd
A hundred times and oftener, in my sleep,
By good St. Alban, who said, "Simpcox, come,
Come, offer at my shrine, and I will help thee."

Wife. Most true, forsooth; and many time and oft
Myself have heard a voice to call him so.

Car. What, art thou lame?

Simp. Ay, God Almighty help me!

Suf. How camest thou so?

Simp. A fall off of a tree.

Wife. A plum-tree, master.

Glo. How long hast thou been blind?

Simp. O, born so, master.

Glo. What, and wouldst climb a tree?

Simp. But that in all my life, when I was a youth.

Wife. Too true; and bought his climbing very dear.

Glo. Mass, thou lovedst plums well, that wouldst venture so.

Simp. Alas, good master, my wife desired some damsons,

And made me climb, with danger of my life.

Glo. A subtle knave! but yet it shall not serve.

Let me see thine eyes : wink now : now open them :
In my opinion yet thou seest not well.

Simp. Yes, master, clear as day, I thank God and
St. Alban.

Glo. Say'st thou me so ? What colour is this cloak
of ?

Simp. Red, master ; red as blood.

Glo. Why, that's well said. What colour is my gown
of ?

Simp. Black, forsooth ; coal-black as jet.

K. Hen. Why then, thou know'st what colour jet is of ?

Suf. And yet, I think, jet did he never see.

Glo. But cloaks, and gowns, before this day a many.

Wife. Never, before this day, in all his life.

Glo. Tell me, sirrah, what's my name ?

Simp. Alas, master, I know not.

Glo. What's his name ?

Simp. I know not.

Glo. Nor his ?

Simp. No, indeed, master.

Glo. What's thine own name ?

Simp. Saunder Simpecox, an if it please you, master.

Glo. Then, Saunder, sit there, the lyingest knave in Christendom. If thou hadst been born blind, thou mightst as well have known all our names, as thus to name the several colours we do wear. Sight may distinguish of colours, but suddenly to nominate them all, it is impossible. My lords, St. Alban here hath done a miracle ; and would ye not think his cunning to be great, that could restore this cripple to his legs again ?

Simp. O, master, that you could !

Glo. My masters of St. Albans, have you not beadle's in your town, and things called whips ?

Mayor. Yes, my lord, if it please your grace.

Glo. Then send for one presently.

May. Sirrah, go fetch the beadle hither straight.

[Exit an Attendant.

Glo. Now fetch me a stool hither by and by. Now, sirrah, if you mean to save yourself from whipping, leap me over this stool and run away.

Simp. Alas, master, I am not able to stand alone : You go about to torture me in vain.

Enter a Beadle with whips.

Glo. Well, sir, we must have you find your legs. Sirrah beadle, whip him till he leap over that same stool.

Bead. I will, my lord. Come on, sirrah ; off with your doublet quickly.

Simp. Alas, master, what shall I do ? I am not able to stand.

[*After the Beadle hath hit him once, he leaps over the stool and runs away ; and they follow and cry,*
“A miracle !”]

K. Hen. O God ! seest thou this, and bearest so long ?

Q. Mar. It made me laugh to see the villain run.

Glo. Follow the knave ; and take this drab away.

Wife. Alas, sir, we did it for pure need.

Glo. Let them be whipped through every market-town, till they come to Berwick, from whence they came.

[*Exeunt Wife, Beadle, Mayor, etc.*

Car. Duke Humphrey has done a miracle to-day.

Suf. True ; made the flame to leap and fly away.

Glo. But you have done more miracles than I ; You made in a day, my lord, whole towns to fly.

There are a good many market-towns on the
317 miles between St. Albans and Berwick.

The Duke was buried hard by the shrine of St. Alban, where his magnificent chantry tomb, built by Abbot Wheathampstead, still remains, bearing amid its delicate sculptures the antelope, his badge. The leaden coffin of the Duke was

opened in 1703, when the body was found “lying in pickle.”

The once well-known phrase, “dining with Duke Humphrey,” is variously explained. It seems to have originated with a visitor to the Abbey in the late sixteenth century having been accidentally locked in the chantry chapel all night. The humour of it spread to London and found a more poignant note in its application to the beggars and insolvent debtors who, with nothing else to do, paced the aisles of Old St. Paul’s. They went dinnerless, without the will to it, and were said to “dine with Duke Humphrey.”

That famous fourteenth-century traveller and writer of travel-lore, Sir John Mandeville, was, according to his own statement, born at St. Albans: a statement which, coming from such an accomplished liar as he who, more than any other before or since, has made “travellers’ tales” a byword, does not necessarily bear the stamp of truth. Indeed, modern commentators are not altogether satisfied that there ever was such a person as this Mandeville, who, if these carping critics be correct, was so incorrigible a fibber that he lied in saying he was ever born at all! Here we begin to flounder in heroics and the immensities; and the further we inquire, the more marvellous and inexplicable grows the mystery. Whether you take him as a real person, or as a myth, it is equally remarkable that an existent, or a non-existent, body should be buried in two places, as is claimed for Mandeville’s.

What purports to be the grave of the famous traveller is shown in this Abbey of St. Alban, near the west end of the nave. A tablet placed on the pillar above it formerly stated that Sir John Mandeville was born here, and here buried in 1372, having commenced his famous travels in 1322, and continued them through the greater part of the world during thirty-four years. There still remains on the pillar the curious black-letter inscription :—

Lo, in this tomb of travellers do ly
One rich in nothing but memory,
His name was Sir John Mandeville, content,
Having seen much mirth, with small confinement ;
Towards which he travelled ever since his birth,
And at last pawned his body to the earth,
Which by a statute must in mortgage be
Till a Redeemer come to set it free.

This seems very straightforward and matter-of-fact, and might stand, were it not that an equally matter-of-fact tomb, with a long Latin epitaph to the same person, was frequently noted by visitors to the church of the *Frères Guillemins* in Liège, until 1798, when the church was destroyed, during the troubles of the French Revolution.

Such marvels as these are thoroughly in keeping with this prototype of Munchausen, whose wildest flights of acknowledged fancy do not approach the magnificent fictions of Mandeville, who appropriated all the most stupendously tall stories of Marco Polo and other narrators of the thing that was not, and added a skyscraping super-

structure of audacious inventions of his own. Modern writers, with the fear of others who have been there, may well envy Mandeville, who could write of men whose heads grew under their arms, and yet be regarded by his contemporaries as truthful ; or could convincingly talk of Ethiopia, after this sort :

“ In Ethiope there are such men as have but one foot, and they go so fast that it is a great marvel ; and that is a large foot, for the shadow thereof covereth the body from Sun or Rain when they lie upon their backs.”

Every man his own umbrella ; what a splendid ideal !

XV

THE interest of St. Albans and its surroundings is not easily to be compressed into a few pages. Everywhere are memories, and in most places visible remains, wherewith to fortify imaginations not of a robust order. The walls of Roman *Verulamium* yet remain in fragmentary condition, to south and west of the Abbey, and close by them stands the village of St. Michael’s, in whose church, sadly spoiled by the late Lord Grimthorpe’s restoring zeal, is the statue of the great Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, whose genius was probably keen enough to have made him capable of writing Shakespeare’s plays : although, despite the contentions of fanatics to the contrary, he did nothing

of the sort. The ruins of his father's and his own house of Gorhambury are still visible a mile away, in the park, and close to the great ugly eighteenth-century classic mansion of Gorhambury, seat of the present Earl of Verulam.

To seek Gorhambury on some thymy morning in May, when the pink horse-chestnuts are in



GORHAMBURY.

bloom, when the air is moist with recent rain and suppressed heat, and a blue haze settles over the wooded landscape, is delightful. Then the scene of the great Chancellor's pride, and of his despairing retirement, is beautiful indeed. The "wisest, wittiest, meanest of mankind" was housed sufficiently well, as the porch, the best-preserved portion of the building, shows. It is a typical Elizabethan Renaissance building, with

panels of marble, and terra-cotta medallion heads of Roman Emperors ; but it looks so small and toylike. Propped though it be with brickwork and iron rods, it cannot much longer survive, and the elaborate shield of the royal arms, the defaced statues and shattered columns are surely falling from picturesque into complete ruin. Apart from the chief group of crumbling walls there stands a poor old battered one-legged and headless statue, said to represent Henry the Eighth, but unrecognisable, scored amazingly with the penknives and the initials of generations of Toms, Dicks, and Harrys. The scene of past pomps and vanities is scarcely mournful, as some might find it ; the sight of it makes history live again as human experience, not as we read it in the dulled pages of historical exercise.

A field-path across the pleasant water-meadows of the river Ver leads from Gorhambury to Prae Mill House and so on to the road again, and thence to Redbourne, a sleepy village with a sleepy railway-station, fringed with meadows where donkeys and ponies graze and ducks and geese march and countermarch aimlessly, their inevitable later association with green peas and sage-stuffing happily hidden from them. Redbourne is one of those “bourne” places which, without adequate reason, appears to discard the final “e.” According to an emphatic inhabitant, “we spell it with a hen, without a he at the hend.” Through the village and out again upon the broad highway, we come presently to Friar’s

Wash, once a water-splash across the road, now a tiny row of cottages and a wayside inn, the "Chequers," standing beside the little river Ver where the old road of pre-Telford days goes off to the right. Flamstead (*i.e.* Verlamstead) church on the hilltop, its characteristic Hertfordshire spirelet, with the appearance as though the greater portion had subsided through the roof, looks



MARKYATE CELL.

down upon the quiet scene. Beyond comes Markyate.

Markyate Street, as it is now, is a wayside village, with a number of more or less decayed coaching and drovers' and waggoners' inns in its narrow street. The lovely old mansion of Markyate Cell, beyond, standing removed from the dusty road, in its beautiful park, owes its name to the spot having once been the hermit's cell of one Roger, a monk of St. Albans, who, returning from pious pilgrimage to Jerusalem, was confronted by three angels, who there and then laid the vocation of hermit upon him, and con-

ducted him to this spot, where he lived ever after : not altogether happy, for he suffered constant persecution from the Devil, who, according to Roger's own account, tried once to drown him, and once set light to his hood. Had he ceased praying, there can be no doubt the worst would have befallen him ; but he continued, unmoved, under these most alarming circumstances, and the Enemy was foiled.

After a while in this solitude, a “ holy virgin,” Christina by name, came from Huntingdon and settled near by the equally holy Roger, who afforded her religious instruction, until he was called away from this vale of tears, when his body was laid in St. Albans Abbey. Christina established the Benedictine Convent of Markyate Cell, and became first Prioress of it in 1145. The mansion that now stands on the site in the wooded park is a veritable dream of peace and beauty ; but there are hiding-holes in it, which sufficiently prove, if proof were wanted, that not always was peace and security the dominant note.

At one mile before Dunstable we leave Hertfordshire and enter Bedfordshire. It was a standing joke with all the coach-guards to ask their passengers “ What comes after Herts ? ” and to answer, before their victims had time to reply, “ Beds, if the Herts are serious enough.” Fortunately, even the weakest jokes that would be anaemic enough by the fireside seem quite robust in the fresh air ; and the tedium of a long

journey was such that even this wretched specimen was not usually resented.

Dunstable's long and very broad chief street was until quite recently a pleasant gravelled stretch of road, but since fast motor-cars have come in crowds upon the highway, the townsfolk, in an attempt to save themselves from the dust they raise, have been obliged to resort to the expedient of treating the thoroughfare with a tarry preparation; with the result that the dust nuisance has not been thoroughly abolished, and instead of the old, cleanly-looking surface there is an ugly, coaly-looking way, smelling abominably.

Of Dunstable, or "Dunstable" as it was formerly written, you may read more fully in the *HOLYHEAD ROAD*; but attention may here be drawn to the old seal of the town, in which one of the once favourite punning allusions is found: here in a double-barrelled form, the representation of a horseshoe standing both for the mythical stable of the legendary robber, Dun, and for a staple, or hasp.

And so at last, through Dunstable town and out by the deep cutting that carries the road on the level, through the chalk downs, we come to Hockliffe, where the Holyhead Road goes off by itself, straight ahead, and the Manchester and Glasgow Road turns sharply to the right, continuing henceforward an independent course.

To compare small things with greater, Hockliffe was to the coaches to and from the north-

west of England very much what Rugby Junction is now. Onward swept the coaches for Coventry, Birmingham, and Holyhead, while the traffic for Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow bore away to Woburn.

XVI

TURNING suddenly from the Holyhead Road at this not very conspicuous corner, the telegraphpoles that have hitherto made so brave a show are missed, and the Manchester Road, for lack of them, seems of less than the first-class importance it really owns. Solitary runs the road for some miles, the sequence of trees and well-plashed quick-set hedges of this well-cared-for district varied only by the companionable signposts bearing the quaint or sonorous names of places on either side: places to which you do not want to go, and of which you have probably never before heard: but you like the information all the same. For one thing, they are earnest of the fact that the country really is inhabited: which the emptiness of the road would lead one to doubt. You speculate idly as to what manner of place "Simpson" may be: "Eaton Bray" is alluring, "Ellesborough" attractive; but it is still over 360 miles to Glasgow, and the invitation into the byways is resisted.

There is a reason for this apparent—and in some sense real—depopulation. We are here within the radius of the blighting influence exer-

cised by the Dukes of Bedford, whose immense seat of Woburn Abbey we are approaching. And even where the Russell tentacles do not reach, there are numerous other great parks. Away to the right, is, for instance, Wrest Park, one of the finest domains in Bedfordshire. Were there aught in the sound of that name, Wrest in Beds should be an ideal place for the born-tired.

By reason of these great landowners, the district through which the road runs for some ten miles is wholly park-like, and the villages to either side are mere insignificant incidents. There is at Milton Bryant, on the right-hand side of the road, a highly instructive example of the manner in which these influences work. The local Wesleyan chapel, greatly resembling a small barn, stands beside the village pond, and indeed, until recently stood *in* it, being supported above the water on posts. In that manner the tiny chapel was originally built in 1861, it being impossible to obtain land elsewhere for the purpose.

Now comes the park-wall of Woburn Abbey, skirting the road for two miles. And not merely a wall, but a hedge in front of it, as well. At such pains have their Graces of Bedford been to obtain additional seclusion in a country where you will scarcely ever meet one person in a mile.

On the way to the little town of Woburn, the chief entrance to this great park is passed; the iron gates, painted an agonising blue which in a mere commoner would be shocking bad taste, recessed from the road at the rear of about half

an acre of grass-plot. That grass-plot is instructive, for it is earnest of the truly ducal scale on which things are done at Woburn.

Woburn Abbey was from 1145 until 1537 a home of Cistercian monks whose Abbots do not figure in history. They performed their religious duties and ruled the brethren and brought their land out of a wild state into an excellent agricultural condition. Only the last Abbot of this long line lives in history. This was Robert Hobbs, who, torn by a tender conscience and uncertain in what way to act for the best, first made submission to Henry the Eighth and then threw in his lot with the insurgents of the Pilgrimage of Grace, a movement to re-establish the monasteries and to replace the ejected monks. The unfortunate Abbot, taken in arms, was executed with dramatic completeness, being hanged on an oak-tree in front of his own Abbey.

Ten years later, that luckiest of Russells, John Russell of Kingston Russell in Dorsetshire, who by fortunate circumstance and courtly address rose from the condition of an obscure country squire to be Earl of Bedford, was granted these lands of Woburn and the fabric of the Abbey, together with much other monastic property in different parts of the country. Other families were recipients of many broad acres, but the Russells were gorged to repletion. Burke in 1796 truly declared that “the grants to the House of Russell were so enormous as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility”;

and the results of those favours are evident to this day in the huge and varied properties of which the Dukes of Bedford are landlords. The great London estates of Bloomsbury and Covent Garden, the lands of Tavistock Abbey, vast districts in the Fens, once the property of Thorney Abbey; and other manors here, there, and everywhere render them really “rich beyond the dreams of avarice.”

The more superstitious among the Roman Catholics have ever dwelt upon the disasters prophesied to the House of Russell, as the beneficiaries to so enormous a degree of the spoliation of the Church; but let us inquire into the subsequent history of the family.

The first Earl of Bedford died in the fulness of time, in his bed, without anything in the supernatural way affecting him. He was succeeded by his son, who was not so fortunate, for three of his four sons died before him, the third being killed by the Scots, on the Borders. His fourth son, Edward, succeeded him as third Earl. He in turn died, in 1627, childless, and the title and estates fell to his cousin Francis. Believers in judgment awaiting sacrilege began at this period to remember the discredited old legends which had declared that no Earl of Bedford should be succeeded by his eldest son.

The family history from this time began thoroughly to support believers in the supernatural, for Francis, the fourth Earl, had two sons, one of whom died without issue, before his

father. The second son, who became the fifth holder of the title, was a man upon whom sorrow laid a heavy hand. His two sons died before him; the eldest unmarried, the second, Lord William Russell, beheaded in 1683 for complicity in the political movement resulting in the Rye House Plot.

That must have been a hollow and barren honour which was conferred upon the bereaved man in 1694, when William the Third created him a Duke, "to solace his excellent father for so great a loss, to celebrate the memory of so noble a son, and to excite his worthy grandson, the heir of such mighty hopes, more cheerfully to emulate and follow the example of his illustrious father." The fifth Earl and first Duke had often before been offered a dukedom, but had declined; so it would seem that the "solace" could have been little comfort to him. He died in his eighty-seventh year, in 1700, and his grandson, Wriothesley, became second Duke, who died eleven years later, and was followed by his son, Wriothesley, third Duke, who died childless in 1732. His brother stepped into his place, and survived until 1771. He was twice married, but his eldest son died on the day of his birth, the second in infancy, and the third, the Marquis of Tavistock, was killed by a fall in the hunting field, in 1767; and he was therefore followed by his grandson, Francis, the fifth Duke, killed in 1802 by a blow from a tennis-ball. The sixth Duke was brother of the last. He died in 1839, and his son Francis,

the seventh Duke, reigned in his stead until 1861. His son William next enjoyed the title until 1872, when it fell to his cousin, Francis, the ninth Duke, who in 1891, in his seventy-second year, committed suicide by shooting himself, under somewhat mysterious circumstances. An unsuccessful attempt was made to hush up the affair :



WOBURN ABBEY.

the first reports to the newspapers declaring that he had died from congestion of the lungs.

The tenth Duke was a man of bloated and unwieldy proportions, who died suddenly in 1893, and was followed by his brother. It would appear, therefore, to recapitulate, that of the fourteen successive holders of the titles of Earl and Duke of Bedford, five only have been succeeded by their eldest sons. In all, there have been six deaths by various forms of violence, in-

cluding those of the aged Lord William Russell, murdered in 1840 by his valet, Courvoisier, in Park Lane, and Lord Henry Russell, who was killed on shipboard in 1842, by a block falling on his head.

The Russells are by tradition Liberals in politics, but it is really only an astute abstract Liberalism, calculated to impress the unthinking, that they affect. I think of them, living behind their park walls, in their huge, hideous house, as a succession of bloated spiders, gorged but still unsatisfied, incredibly rich, incredibly wealthy, shamelessly mean : deriving from their London ground-rents an income that emperors might envy, and yet sharing no burdens and doing no work for the State.

The great mansion of Woburn Abbey stands in the middle of a park twelve miles in circumference : that is to say, for purposes of ready comparison, a quarter larger than Richmond Park. Of the Abbey itself nothing is left, and on the site of it stands the vast gloomy building begun by Flitcroft in 1744 for the fourth Duke, and looking more like some public institution of the asylum sort than a residence. It is a veritable treasure-house of art, jealously closed against visitors, except grudgingly, once a year, on the August Bank Holiday ; but public paths run through a great portion of the park, lovely with its woody glades, still lakes, and couching fawns.

There is no doubt possible to even the most hurried wayfarer as to who owns the tiny townlet

of Woburn, just outside the park. The great old coaching inn, the "Bedford Arms," proclaims it, alike in its name and in the heraldic signboard, displaying the arms of the Russells and their motto, *Che sara sara*—*i.e.* "What will be, will be." And, judging from the demeanour of the few people to be seen, the Dukes of Bedford own them too. It is not enough for the Dukes that they reside secluded in the midst of their wide-spreading



WOBURN.

park. They look with disfavour upon a town at their gates, even though that town be in fact but a village; and in consequence there is no new building in the place. If the prevailing Russell characteristic were not parsimony, there can scarce be any doubt that they would have razed Woburn to the ground; but that would cost something, an excruciating thought to this frugal race. Therefore Woburn remains very much what it was a hundred years ago. Cobblestones of the "petrified kidney" kind pave the

road and footpaths, and the shops are of the kind in which Jane Austen might have bought her linen and her groceries. Quaint shop-fronts they are, with windows patterned like the glazed doors of antique bureaus. In short, Woburn is a rare and interesting relic of times past.

Expansion of business is a thing unthinkable here, and some shops, and some of the one-time many inns, have given up in despair. The only new, or comparatively new, things in Woburn are the parish church and the town hall: the last-named built in 1830, and the church in 1868, with alterations in 1890.

It is somewhat difficult to characterise the new church. When you have called it "Early English," you momentarily think you have the style, but no: there is a florid, alien, meretricious manner in it that refuses classification. The peculiarly chalky white stone of which it is built is not pleasing. At any rate, it was ducally expensive: having cost the eighth Duke £30,000. The chief idea was the greater glorification of future Russells, whose tombs were intended to be placed here; but the constant reminder outside their own park that even Dukes of Bedford must die did not commend itself to others of the clan, and so their historic burial-place at Chenies, in Buckinghamshire, many miles distant, is retained. The angles of the church tower are finished off, against the sky-line, with four devils whose weird aspect, horse-like heads and curled manes impress me more than anything else, unless indeed it be

the perfection of the magnificent lawn that slopes steeply to the road.

All the way from sleepy old Woburn to the modern, very much up-to-date, and bustling town of Woburn Sands the road passes through beautiful woodlands, echoing with the voices of pheasants, and rich in the odours of pine and beech and laurel. In midst of this scenery, the half-timbered "Henry the Eighth's Lodge," with clipped yew-trees, in shape like so many Stilton cheeses, is very striking. After these solitudes, Woburn Sands comes very much as a surprise, and to some perhaps not altogether a welcome one.

Woburn Sands is an entirely modern name. You will look in vain for it in the pages of Cary or Paterson, for in the old days of the road the place was merely an insignificant hamlet known by the unlovely name of Hogstye End. But things have happened since then. A branch line of the London and North-Western Railway was constructed, crossing the road at this point, and with a station at the roadside. Thus brought into touch with the outer world, the simple souls of Hogstye End arose as one man, and demanded a new name for the place: and so the title of Woburn Sands was invented. To-day, the astonished traveller sees a typical twentieth-century township on the site of Hogstye End: a rosy, red-brick place, growing at the expense of Woburn itself; and making strenuous claims to be a health-resort, by reason of the sandy soil and the wide-spreading fir-woods. The observant traveller will

notice a singular testimony to the belief, until recently prevailing, that the days of the road were done, in the arrogant behaviour of the railway company at this point, in actually encroaching upon the main highway with the out-buildings of their station and the obstructing position of the gates of their level-crossing, often closed for ten minutes at a time during shunting operations.

Leaving Woburn Sands, we incidentally leave Bedfordshire and enter Bucks, coming in seven miles, past the unremarkable villages of Wavendon and Broughton, to the town of Newport Pagnell.

XVII

NEWPORT PAGNELL is not a port nor is it new, and the Paganelles who gave it the second half of its name have been extinct so many centuries that there are not even any monuments of them left in the church. There is indeed nothing feudal in the appearance of the little town, and the very site of the great Norman castle built by Fulke Paganel is obscure.

It is a little, lop-sided town, calm and cleanly, with houses, stone-built and brick, chiefly of Queen Annean and Georgian dates, situated on the river Ouse. To enter the town, you cross over that not very broad river by an iron bridge, built in 1810; and there you obtain the prettiest view in all Newport. Immediately across the

bridge is “Queen Anne’s,” or St. John’s Hospital, looking very new, for it has recently been rebuilt. One of its many rebuildings was that by Queen Anne, in 1615 : not the Queen Anne who (as the saying goes) is dead, but another Queen Anne who is, if possible, even more dead : the Anne of Denmark, who was Queen of James the First.



NEWPORT PAGNELL.

Even the hospitallers who are still advantaged by her re-founding of the ancient almshouse are in a state of benighted ignorance as to her identity : they either suppose her to be the Anne, Queen Regnant, whom we all know ; or else frankly say they “dunno nawthin’ about who she wor,” and might with equal truth add that they don’t care.

Almost all that remains of the old building

is a tablet, with inscription very difficult to be read, and weirdly misspelled, imploring :

Alyov good christiams that here dooe pas
By give soome thimg to thes poore people
That im St. Johms Hospital doeth ly.

1615.

Newport Pagnell has already been referred to as “lop-sided,” a phenomenon occasioned by the railway station at the western end of the town. It is not a large station, and it is only the terminus of a short branch from Wolverton, but it has caused the little building that has taken place in Newport in the last sixty years to be done almost exclusively here. Near by, in a house called “The Green,” there once lived an eccentric medical man, a Dr. Patrick Renny, who was born in 1734, and died here in 1805; being buried, by the terms of his will, in the garden, where an obelisk over his grave—now entirely overgrown with ivy, and looking like an ancient tree—may still be seen.

In leaving Newport Pagnell, we may depart in imaginary company with John Wesley, who was riding horseback this way to Northampton on May 21st, 1742, when he overtook one who eventually proved to be a Calvinist, “a serious man with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were, therefore I said nothing to contradict them. He was quite uneasy to know ‘whether I held the doctrines of the decrees as he did’; but I told him over and over ‘We had

better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry with one another.' And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer; told me I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Wesley's followers. I told him 'No, I am John Wesley himself.' Upon which he would gladly have run away outright. But being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side and endeavoured to show him his heart till we came into the street of Northampton."

Let us hope that Calvinist was duly convinced of error.

To the north, on our road to Northampton, Newport has grown not at all: for reasons sufficient to the observation of all who pass this way: the river Ouse and its adjacent wet meadows, over which the road is taken on a bridge and a causeway, forbidding, even if the parish boundary did not.

Here is Lathbury, whose church and few houses are to be sought off the road by turning to the left at a point where a formal red brick mansion, formerly "Lathbury Inn," stands. There was some little trouble here in 1745, when Mrs. Symes, of Lathbury Park, an ardent Jacobite, refused the Duke of Cumberland and his army a passage through her estate: with the result (as she did not possess an army of her own) that they passed through, riotously and destructively, instead of decently and in good order.

The little church of Lathbury is a singularly beautiful village church, with oddly diminishing tower walls. The interior, Norman and Early English, still preserves abundant traces of frescoes of Renaissance character, with texts and the beautiful Lord's Prayer. A small brass, dated 1661, to one Davies, son of a former rector, is placed



LATHBURY CHURCH.

here, according to the inscription, so that other "Cambria-Brittaines," passing, should see it. "Cambria-Brittaine" appears to be seventeenth-century pedant's language for "Welshman."

The stable-clocks of Gayhurst and Tyringham chiming from either side of the road advertise the whereabouts of those places, effectively hidden though they be in summer by wayside foliage, save for a glimpse here and there. The historic manor-

house of Gayhurst might readily be missed, were it not for the lodge-gates; and that would be a loss indeed, for the place is historic in very dramatic sort. The present house dates back in its oldest portions to 1500, when an Early Renaissance mansion was erected by the Nevill family, who ended in an heiress whose marriage brought the estate into the family of Mulso. It was Thomas Mulso who in the time of Queen Elizabeth remodelled the house, and, like many another loyal gentleman of that age, gave it a ground-plan representing the letter E, in compliment to his sovereign: the end limbs of the E being represented by the wings, and the middle limb by the projecting porch. Soon again, however, for lack of heirs male, Gayhurst changed hands, when Mary Mulso married the handsome young Catholic gentleman, Sir Everard Digby, in 1596. The old hiding-places, secret chambers, and uncomfortable quarters in the chimney-flues, with which the house had been thoughtfully provided, were found very useful in the rash young Sir Everard's time, for he was one of the participants in the Gunpowder Plot, and entertained his fellow-plotters here. Realising the risks he ran, he made over Gayhurst by deed of gift to his son, Kenelm, then but twelve months old. Thus, by early application of the Heavensent limited-liability principle, he preserved the estate from the otherwise inevitable confiscation that awaited unsuccessful treason; and went to the scaffold in January 1606, easy on that head.

And so, in due course, Sir Kenelm came to his own, and although he endured persecutions and whips and scorns under the Commonwealth, was not altogether unhappy.

The large edible snails he introduced from the South of France, in the hope of curing his consumptive wife, Venetia, still have their descendants in the woods here : the woods that represent those early boskages whence Gayhurst obtained its



GAYHURST.

original name of Goddeshurst, which gradually, by way of "Gotehurst," *i.e.* "God's Wood," and "Gothurst," has become what it is now.

The Digbys ended in two unmarried sisters, who in 1704 sold their ancestral home to Sir Nathan Wrighte, Queen Anne's Keeper of the Seals, whose monumental effigy, gorgeously robed, lies in the classic church hard by the house ; and the Wrightes themselves parted with it in 1830.

Beside historic associations, Gayhurst has literary memories, for this is the poet Cowper's

country, and he often visited the Mr. Wright of that age, travelling from Olney, little more than four miles away, to admire the gardens, the hot-houses, and "the orange-trees, the most captivating creatures of the kind I ever saw." But he does not enlarge upon the interesting Early Renaissance architecture of the older part of the house, which is very justly admired nowadays. The Queen



THE "GEORGE AND DRAGON," EAKLEY LANE.

Anne additions, comparatively recent as they were in his time, were better thought of, and the classic church considered exquisite. It was one of Sir Christopher Wren's last designs, but the great architect never saw it built, for he died, aged ninety-two, in 1723, and it was not begun until the following year.

The Ouse, glinting steel-blue amid the green meadows, is seen away to the right of the road, on the way to Eakley Lane, winding placidly

and sluggishly along. It is, of course, Cowper's Ouse :

Ouse, slow-winding through a level plain.

Passing through the village of Stoke Goldington, where the golden-brown stone of Northamptonshire—the “sugar-stone,” as it is locally styled—is first noticed in the buildings, Inckley, or Eakley Lane is reached. “Eakley,” which appears to derive from “Ea” = water, and “lea” = a meadow, referring to the neighbouring watermeadows of the Ouse, is the proper name, but the spot was known indifferently by either spelling in coaching days, when it was notable for two inns, the “Bull’s Head” and the “George and Dragon.” Both houses are still in existence, but have long since ceased to be inns.

Old houses that were once inns are indeed remarkably plentiful in these next few miles. At Horton there stands what was formerly “Horton Inn,” now a handsome country residence. Obviously it was built in two separate periods; beginning business in a modest way and then enlarged to twice its original size. Doubtless further enlargements and improvements were in contemplation when the era of railways came in and doomed all such hopes to failure. A spacious drive once led up to the house, but that was long ago walled in and converted into a garden.

Here we come into Northamptonshire, uphill, into the region that was once known as Salcey Forest, which, with the Forest of Rockingham

to the east and that of Whittlebury on the west, was in the days of the Plantagenet kings a portion of a vast chase, in which the red deer were of far more account than men.

Northamptonshire, which takes its name from Northampton, the county town (itself originally merely “Hampton,” and afterwards styled “North Hampton” for the express purpose of distinguish-



HORTON INN.

ing it from Southampton), is an undulating shire of what Horace Walpole was pleased to style, rather aptly, “dumpling hills.” It is rich in building-stone of various kinds, largely of that beautiful golden-russet ferruginous sandstone, already referred to as “sugar-stone”; hence the fine substantial character of local buildings. Brick is not introduced largely into the architecture of its towns and villages.

Fuller, who was a native of this shire, writing of it two hundred and fifty years ago, said there was as little waste ground here as in any county of England, and compared Northamptonshire with “an apple without core to be cut out, or rind to be pared away.” His praise was not extravagant, for the country contains little or nothing in the way of bleak heath or barren moor.

This “shire of squires and spires” is also in old folk-rhyme that of “spinsters and springs,” and of “pride, poverty, and puddings,” ascriptions not readily to be understood, unless they be merely examples of a rustic passion for alliteration reduced to an absurdity; for spinsters abound in other shires, and no one surely would seriously contend that Northamptonshire was favoured above the ordinary in the matter of springs, conceit, pauperism, and puddings. But the spires are, at any rate, an indubitable and a beautiful architectural fact.

Passing through Horton, we make a first acquaintance with them at Piddington, a village of the smallest dimensions with a church of the largest. Both are situated a few hundred yards off the road, the Early English church spire peaking up magnificently among the trees, with a peculiar richness of outline. Restoration recently in progress with the particularly vivid yellow-brown stone from the Duston quarries, two miles from Northampton, makes the restored patches stand out with glaring offensiveness; but Time will remedy that—as all other ills.

Hackleton, a large but rather characterless place, quickly follows upon Horton and Piddington, and is the last village before reaching Northampton, five miles away. Its position, the



PIDDINGTON CHURCH.

next place out of the town on the road to London, made it in the days before railways a very special halting-place for drovers and the humbler wayfarers, and its inns were many. Superior to the rest was the "New Inn," now a private residence,

but for long years after it had retired from trade bearing on its front the legend “Wines and Spirits : Entertainment for Man and Beast” ; with the not unnatural result that the privacy of the occupants was frequently invaded by seekers after that entertainment.

Little more than one mile from Northampton town, near by the junction of the road to Stony Stratford, where the highway assumes a magnificent breadth, stands on a grassy bank the finest of the famous Eleanor Crosses, raised by Edward the First to the memory of his Queen, Eleanor of Castile, who died of a lingering fever at Harby, in Nottinghamshire, November 28th, 1290. It is placed in a solitary position, on a grassy selvedge of the road, at a spot in the parish of Hardingstone, close by the grounds of what was once the Abbey of Delapré, or De Pratis, the Abbey of the Meadows, founded for an establishment of Cluniac nuns by Simon of Senlis, the crusading Earl of Northampton, in the late Norman period.

The dearly loved Queen of Edward the First died in what was then the remote district of Sherwood Forest, but the King decided that her body should rest at Westminster Abbey, and so, with impressive deliberation, the long journey was made.

Although travelling was a slow and tedious process in those days, it was not necessarily so slow as this lengthy funeral procession. On December 4th, the body of the Queen having been previously removed from Harby to Lincoln Cathedral, the

solemn pageant set out for Westminster, but did not reach London until eleven days later, and the entombment did not take place in the Abbey until the 17th of the month. The reasons for the length of time taken are twofold, and are to be found in the pompous circumstances under which the journey was taken, and in the circuitous route chosen. The usual route was by way of Stamford and Huntingdon, and so by Royston and Cheshunt, but it was intended that the procession should pass through a more frequented line of country and districts where the Queen had been better known. Another object was to take some of the greater religious houses on the way, and thus have suitably dignified places where to rest at the close of every day. The route chosen was, therefore, Grantham, Stamford, Geddington, Northampton, Stony Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, St. Albans, Waltham, West Cheap, and Charing.

The greatest magnificence marked the occasion, and twelve memorial crosses, of different design, were afterwards erected on the places where the bier had rested. Charity was given and masses paid for, and here at Hardingstone, close by the Abbey of Delapré, in whose chapel the body of the Queen rested for the night, this most beautiful of the three remaining crosses was erected. "Living, I loved her dearly," the King wrote to the Abbot of Cluny, "and dead I shall never cease to love her"; and so with every care the great officers of State who accompanied the procession were directed to mark with particular care

those resting-places the King thought sacred, so that no doubt might arise as to the exact spot where these memorials should be built.

The detailed accounts of the cost of these crosses exist to this day in the Record Office, where, inscribed in crabbed Latin on parchment rolls, they may be readily seen, if not so readily deciphered. From them may be gathered the names of the masons and the sculptors engaged : John de Bello being the chief architect of the crosses at Hardingstone, Stony Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, and St. Albans ; and "Alexander le Imaginator," otherwise Alexander of Abingdon, and William of Ireland the chief sculptors of the statues. Master Richard de Crundale was principal "cementarius," or master-mason.

A very special care that the Cross should be frequented is to be observed in the remains of the stone-flagged pathway from Northampton, constructed at the time when the Cross was built, for the purpose of ensuring an easy journey to the spot, where the devout might pray for the soul of the departed Queen. The cost of this is set down in the accounts in payments of forty and sixty marks.

In spite of the weathering of over six hundred years, and the mischief wrought by thoughtless people, the Cross is still a finely preserved work, and the graceful statues of the Queen under their protecting canopies in the upper stage are yet beautiful. But more than shoulder-high, the initials of the obscure, carved numerously in



QUEEN ELEANOR CROSS.

From a photograph taken before the restoration of 1884.

the stone, bear witness to that passion for remembrance that belongs to all classes, and has written itself deeply on venerable monuments such as this, in tree-trunks, on the margins of books, on walls, and on window-panes innumerable.

Many restoring hands, and others that can scarcely be so described, have been laid upon “Queen’s Cross,” as it is locally styled. In the reign of Queen Anne, a good deal was done, and was complacently alluded to in a long Latin inscription on a huge tablet which, together with the Royal Arms, was actually affixed to the Cross, in company with a sundial on each of the eight sides. We may judge of the self-sufficient spirit of those “restorers” in this English version of the inscription: “For the perpetual commemoration of conjugal affection, the honourable Assembly of Magistrates, or Justices, of the County of Northampton, resolved to restore this monument to Queen Eleanor, nearly falling into ruins by reason of age, in that most auspicious year 1713, in which Anne, the glory of her mighty Britain, the most powerful avenger of the oppressed, the arbitress of peace and war, after that Germany had been set free, Belgium made secure by garrisons, the French overthrown in more than ten battles, by her own, and by the arms of her allies, made an end of conquering, and restored peace to Europe, after she had given it freedom.”

Dear me!

A charming afterthought, showing that the justices could descend from Imperial heights to

domestic levels, was the placing of a pair of stocks at the base.

In 1762 it was thought necessary to have another shy at the venerable relic, and evidence long remained of it, in another tablet, with the words, “Again repaired and restored in the second year of King George the Third, and of our Lord 1762.” The combination of loyalty and piety is rich indeed.

Again, in 1832 a restoration was effected, at a cost of £300. Happily, no more tablets were affixed, and more happily still, the existing ones were removed. Further, in 1884, the restorations of earlier years were re-restored at a cost of £320. The shattered cross crowning the structure, destroyed at some remote period, has never been replaced.

XVIII

WHATEVER the truth of the old saying that the traveller might know, by the smell of the leather and the noise of the lapstones, when he was within a mile of Northampton, it scarcely holds good now, for although bootmaking, the ancient and distinctive trade of the town, is still its great staple industry, and is, as every one knows, infinitely larger and more important than ever before, it is scarcely to be distinguished at this distance.

Of course, as everywhere, the distant view of the town is nowadays largely a prospect of gaso-

meters, and unless the traveller already knew of Northampton's bootmaking trade he might, entering by the London Road and Cotton End, well believe he was come to a town of breweries, another Burton-on-Trent: for there, beside the railway level-crossing and the river Nene, stands the great brewery of Phipps & Co.

"Northampton on the Nene": that is a piece of school geography not readily forgotten, but, however greatly that information may bulk in the memory, both by reason of its alliteration and being so early insisted upon, the river Nene is not, truth to tell, so very much in evidence. The uninstructed might suppose it to be a canal, and a dirty one at that.

It is not a prepossessing entrance, this narrow street of old and grimy, but not ancient, houses and third-rate shops, that leads up into the town, but many surprises await the explorer who, primed with armchair knowledge, sets out upon the road to correct his reading by his own observation. Such an one would find that only strangers speak of "Northampton" as spelled, giving full value to the "North." To the townspeople it is "N'Thampton." Each style seems quaint to those who favour the other.

The stranger would expect to find Northampton, as a factory town, a place of squalor and grime; but coming here, and emerging into the market-place from the not very pleasing entrance, his expectations are utterly shattered. There are few towns of the size of Northampton—whose

population is now considerably over 89,000—that are so bright and clean, and prosperous-looking, as this; and the stranger, to whom its Radical politics are familiar, and to whom its choice for many years of such Parliamentary representatives as Mr. Henry Labouchere and Bradlaugh argued (reasonably or not I will not declare) brutality and atheism, is pleasurable surprised at not finding the ancient and beautiful churches of the town become “temples of Reason,” lecture-halls, or other things in the secular way. Nor does he perceive, as he had half-anticipated, scowling Radical-Atheists engaged in violence, or shouting insults after the clergy and every person with a good coat upon his back. The picture thus drawn seems farcical, but it does by no means belie the ideas of a great many people who have never been in Northampton and instinctively form a picture of it from tales of its ancient election turbulence and from its choice of representatives in modern times. Northampton is nothing like that: dignity and beauty characterise its chief streets, and municipal effort so long ago as 1864 sought to beautify the town with a splendid Guildhall. Poetry springs—albeit unconsciously—even in the breasts of its Town Councillors and Poor Law Guardians: where none would seek it: Sir William Gilbert makes Bunthorne suspect, in *Patience*, that

Nature, in all thy works
Something poetic lurks,
Even in colocynth and calomel

How true that is! Even in the prosaic person of a Poor Law Guardian, the fount of true poesy may be bubbling, all unknown; as in that of a member of the Board of Guardians at Northampton, who, in January 1907, challenged the workhouse master's expenditure of £6 10s. on marking-ink. Said he (he bore the great name of Dickens), lisping in numbers :

I want to speak to you and the Board very plain ;
I trust my appeal will not be in vain ;
I hope you will pause and seriously think
Before ordering any more marking-ink.

It does not quite scan, but to a man who speaks poetry unawares, inspired by such a domestic detail as marking-ink, a little practice should make perfect. To what heights might he not rise on the subject (say) of baths or drains!

The Guildhall, already referred to, is a building of extremely ornate character, designed by Godwin, with a florid, many-niched and canopied front, furnished with statues of the chief makers of Northampton's history, and with even the capitals of its columned vestibule carved after the mediæval manner with groups of tiny figures. But in 1864 architectural sculptors had but begun to recover the forgotten arts of the mediæval craftsman, and the execution of the designs is at once coarse and feeble. The interior, except the light and very fine, but barbarically coloured great hall, is of a truly Gothic gloom.

We first find mention of "Hamtune," as it was originally styled, in the Saxon Chronicle,

when the Middle Angles occupied this district of the kingdom of Mercia. Then the Danes, who came first to ravage, settled in this part of the country, and the history of the town, which even then was a considerable place, for very many years remained one of fighting, and the victories of first one and then another. So often as it was burned, it was again rebuilt: no difficult matter then, when the houses were chiefly of timber. In 1065, the year before the coming of the Conqueror, it was again burnt, in the jealous struggles between the Saxon rulers; and there can be little doubt that, wearied of being ground to powder between the upper and the nether mill-stones of these ambitions, the people of Hampton were not altogether averse from being ruled by a stronger hand, in whose time a little peace might be assured.

Certain it is that Northampton flourished under Norman rule, perhaps more than any other provincial town. The great castle then built has utterly disappeared, but other signs of great expansion remain, in the ancient Norman churches; and history tells us how favourite a place this was with the Norman and the Plantagenet sovereigns, who hunted in the vast surrounding forests, and held council in the great hall of the castle. The most famous of these councils was that of 1164, when Becket's ultimate fate was foreshadowed. The fierce contest for the supremacy of the Church, or of its subordination to the State in the person of the monarch, had for some time past been in

progress. A number of charges had been preferred against the Archbishop, and he was summoned to Northampton to meet them. He arrived and was refused the ceremonial kiss of peace by the King : his bishops renounced his authority, and when he marched to the hall of the castle, carrying his own archiepiscopal cross, the King and court withdrew, leaving him and a few faithful attendants alone. Dwell upon the scene for a moment, and picture the ominous and dramatic grandeur of it. Becket, already threatened with exile or death, fled to the coast and expatriated himself for six years ; returning at last to his martyrdom at Canterbury.

The battles of Northampton in after years carried on the early warlike associations of the town : the first in 1264, when the revolting barons shut themselves up here, and the town and castle were besieged and taken by Prince Edward ; the second in 1460, when the Yorkists defeated the Lancastrians with great slaughter, in the Delapré meadows outside the town, and captured the person of Henry VI. himself. By all historic precedents Northampton should have been the scene of a contest in the long struggle between King Charles and his Parliament ; but, fortunately for the burgesses, who were commercial folk and not greatly interested, the castle was too far gone in decay to be useful to either side, and the great Northamptonshire battle of Naseby was fought twelve miles away.

Boots and shoes were Northampton's chief interest, and whoso would might fight for King

or Parliament, so only the business of the town were let alone; but in 1648 the town supplied Cromwell's army with fifteen hundred pairs. The beginnings of this ancient trade go deep down into history. King John bought a pair of boots described as "single-soled." The transaction is recorded in Latin—"pro 1 pari botarum singularum," and the price was twelve pence, probably for cash, for no one who could possibly help himself would have thought of giving credit to so shabby a fellow as King John.

And so throughout the centuries. Scarce a war happened but Northampton benefited by the increased demand for shoe-leather. Old Fuller in the long ago declared that it "may be said to stand chiefly on other men's legs," and there is probably a deep-seated conviction in the minds of the townsfolk that the state of the boot-and-shoe trade is a more sure index of the prosperity of the nation than that of the iron and shipbuilding trades, usually regarded as the chief indicators of the national welfare.

This conviction of the prime importance of foot-gear has in its time led to some quaint doings; notably when Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort came through the town in 1844, when the Mayor gave the Prince—who did not want them—a pair of boots. I suspect there have been many thousands of wayfarers through the town who *did* sorely want a pair, and never had the offer.

Thousands of pairs of mud-boots were des-



NORTHAMPTON : MARKET PLACE AND ALL SAINTS' CHURCH.

patched hence to the Army in the Crimea ; but whence came the brown paper and cardboard boots supplied by contractors to our poor fellows in that mismanaged campaign ? Not from Northampton, I trust.

Of the Northampton Parliamentary elections, famed in the long ago for the bitterness with which they were fought, none are more celebrated than the "great spendthrift election," waged in 1761 between my lords Northampton, Spencer, and Halifax, for the privilege of nominating a member. The enormous expenses incurred were not the most remarkable thing about this contest, although they were unprecedented ; nor was the fourteen days' duration of the poll a thing unheard of. The really startling feature was the heaviness of that poll. Northampton had not only voted its full strength of 930 electors, but 217 over. A petition followed, and was settled, in the sporting manner of the age, by a toss. Lord Spencer won, and nominated his man—who resided in India.

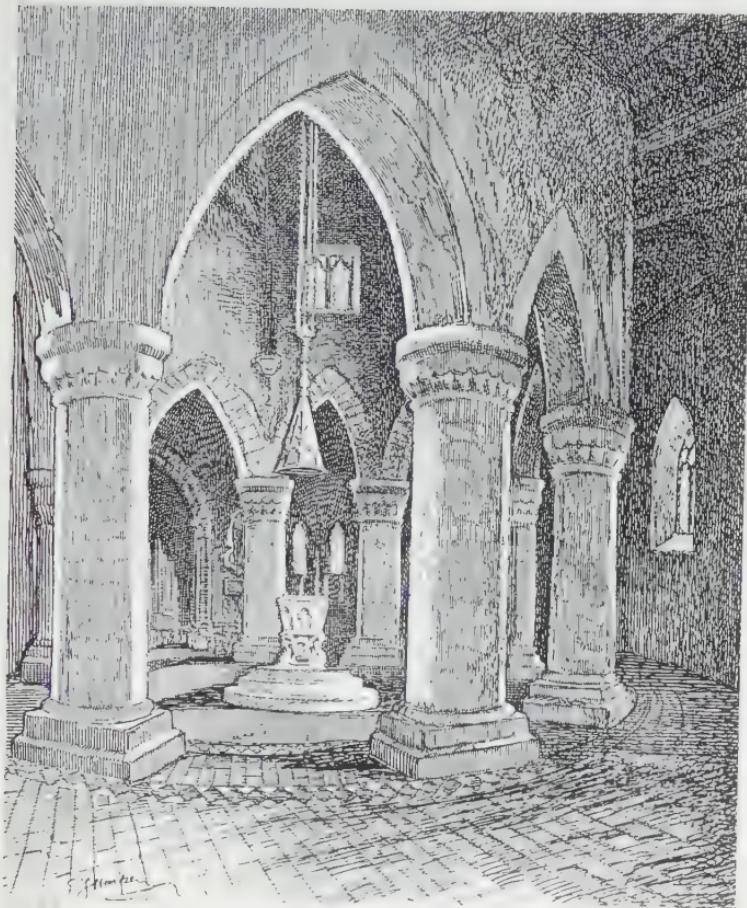
The old churches of Northampton are very fine, and highly interesting in their several ways. There are four of them : St. Peter's, St. Giles's, Holy Sepulchre, and All Saints'. It seems strange, considering how ancient is the distinctive trade, that there is no church dedicated to St. Crispin, the patron saint of bootmakers and cobblers. Of all these churches that of the Holy Sepulchre is the most archaeologically interesting ; but to most people it is the great church of All Saints, in

the Market Square, that stands for Northampton. And rightly so, for it is not merely in the centre of the town, but in a most striking and emphatic position ; it is also the church selected by the Corporation for its state attendance of Divine worship, as the fine Mayor's Chair in it—inscribed “Anno Majoratus 2^{do} Ricardi White, Anno Dom. 1680”—proves ; and its curious architectural appearance gives to Northampton a distinct personality among English towns. This is in its present form no mediæval building, but a very remarkable structure of the time of Charles the Second, as we may readily perceive from the statue of him, clad in flowing wig and Roman toga, that surmounts the pillared west front.

Along the entablature above the imposing Ionic colonnade runs the inscription : “This statue was erected in memory of King Charles II., who gave a thousand tun of timber toward the rebuilding of this church and to this town.” The circumstance that made the rebuilding necessary and prompted the gift of timber (which came from the neighbouring Forest of Whittlebury) was the almost complete destruction of the old building in the great fire of 1675, when six hundred houses were also burnt. The tall tower, cased, bell-turreted, and balustraded, is a relic of the incinerated church.

St. Sepulchre's —properly the “Church of the Holy Sepulchre”—generally known as “Pulker's Church,” or “St. Pulker's,” one of the four round churches in England—or five if we may include

the round chapel in Ludlow Castle—is ascribed to the influence of the Templars, whose churches were avowedly built on the model of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Like the Temple Church



INTERIOR, CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

and others, it is the nave portion of the building that is circular; the choir and presbytery branching eastwards from it. It is in a massive and gloomy Transitional Norman style, the eight huge

pillars surmounted by pointed arches. It is magnificent in its austerity and in the warm golden-brown hue of the stone.

St. Giles's, of nearly all styles from Norman to Perpendicular, and St. Peter's, a fine late Norman work, built about 1160, complete the ancient churches of the town, with the exception of the mouldering old St. John's Hospital, now used as a French Catholic church.

XIX

THE electric tramways, without which no town nowadays considers itself fully furnished, run far out to the north, through the extended boundaries of "Greater Northampton" to the village of Kingsthorpe: the prosperity of the town certified to every beholder in the long lines of newly completed streets butting on to the fields, and in the new boot and shoe factories, from which you do not indeed hear the noise of the lapstones—such things being obsolete in these days of machinery—but the purr and the humming of wheels.

Just outside the borough boundaries are even more factories, built there for the frugal purpose of avoiding the borough rates; and so, in one way and another, Kingsthorpe, which was not so long since a rural village, with quiet village green, has now been invaded by the restless spirit of the age. Even the village inn has been rebuilt by the inevitable Phipps & Co., and might now,

to all appearance, save for the sign of it, be a Jacobean mansion, renovated.

The apparent prodigality of the highway authorities at Kingsthorpe, in the matter of milestones, is a standing wonder to all wayfarers, for there, side by side, are two cast-iron "stones," each giving sixty-seven miles to London, with distances to other places. The explanation of this singularity is that here, in the old days, the Kingsthorpe and Welford Trust and the Northampton and Market Harborough Trust met. The "stone" erected by the first gives thirteen miles to Welford, twenty-nine to Leicester, and one to Northampton: the other indicates sixteen miles to Market Harborough and one to Northampton.

To the right of the road on to Brixworth rises among a group of trees on the skyline a tall obelisk that piques curiosity. Traversing muddy lanes to the base of it, the explorer afflicted with an inquiring mind discovers, to his disgust, that it bears no inscription, and local inquiries result only in vague rustic talk of its being a monument to the great Duke of Wellington. Research proves it to be to a Duke of Devonshire; but although the rustics are thus proved to be wrong, the attitude of mind that leads them astray is, it will be allowed, entirely in order. From father to son the story has been handed down that it is in memory of *a* Duke: what other Duke, therefore, should be possible than the great warrior who still bulks so large in their imagination? They rightly cannot conceive that a Duke who

has merely succeeded to a dukedom, and just existed in that state, has a claim to such recognition. But the thing is not without its sardonic irony. Built to keep alive the memory of an obscure dead Duke, it is known in all the countryside as a monument to one whose fame will not die, and needs no such memorial.

This monument that has missed its mark stands at the parish of Boughton (locally pronounced "Bowghton"), famous, together with the adjoining Boughton Green, for the exploits of "Captain Slash." There was once a church, dedicated to St. John Baptist, at Boughton Green, but the tower and spire fell in 1785, and the district becoming gradually depopulated, the body of the church has long been a roofless ruin. The green is nowadays, except for one annual occasion, merely a desolate common. In former days, however, it was bordered by the cottages of more or less virtuous and contented peasantry, who did so excellently well during the old three-days' horse-fair held here in June that they lived in comfort all the rest of the year. To the old horse-fair resorted horsey blackguards from many a shire, who swindled the innocent and each other, and fought and got drunk and slept in the ditches, whereupon the simple rusties, recognising that it was harvest-time, promptly went over their pockets. But the good old days are done. The police established a lock-up on the ground for the drunken and for other offenders, and then by degrees the fair itself decayed, until to-day it

is but a one-day ghost of itself. The brick hut used as a lock-up still stands on the green.

But we must not forget "Captain Slash," whose real name was George Catherall, a desperado of the highwayman type, who did a little rick-burning and general rural outraging in the '20's of the nineteenth century, and brought his lawless career to a dramatic close in 1826. He attempted, with the gang he captained, to let loose the lions in the menagerie on the fair-ground, hoping in the confusion to make away with a rich haul; but this desperate proposal was defeated on the eve of accomplishment. Very ancient gaffers at Boughton still tell the tale of dread as they heard it in their youthful days: how "Haaron Gardner 'it'n auver th' yed with a nedge stake," and so brought about his capture, and how "Slash" was sentenced to death, and on July 21st was duly executed at Northampton Gaol, and the land had peace. It was certainly very late in the day for outlaws, but not too late for superstition, for newspaper reports of the execution tell how "a number of females immediately ascended the drop and had their wens rubbed."

And so, passing the site of the old "Bowden" or Boughton Inn of coaching days, to Brixworth, meeting, possibly, on the way, a straining field of the Pytchley Hunt, in whose country we now are. You must be careful how you enunciate "Pytchley." John Bright once mentioned it in the House of Commons. He called it the "Pitchley," and stood aghast at the howl of derision which arose

from the assembled fox-hunters masquerading as legislators. It was a fox-hunting House then, and “Labour” (*i.e.* well-paid agitators acting the part) was not dreamt of. Pytchley is your only way, although to be sure there are heretics who call it the “Patchley.” But they are worse barbarians than Bright, who knew no better.

Brixworth is an old, old place, truly “old arnshunt,” as the rustics say; but the latter-day discovery that it is profitable to work the ironstone beds situated here is just beginning to hustle the grey Roman and Saxon antiquity of it, with a fringe of red-brick cottages. Red brick in a country where building stone is of the plentifullest!

Many evidences of the presence here of the Romans have been discovered, and the great grim church of Brixworth, built largely of Roman brick and tile, has been thought by antiquaries to be, in fact, a Roman basilica. Roman coins have also been found in fairly large numbers; but history tells of no camp or town of that people here; and this is no Roman road. The church, locally said to be the “oldest in England,” appears to have been built or adapted by the Saxons so far back as A.D. 690, and thus “Briclesworde,” as it is styled in Domesday Book, was of a hoary antiquity even when that genuine antique, William the Conqueror, “came over.” The church was then a dependency of the great monastery of Medehamsted—the “Peterborough” of to-day—and until the vicarage was rebuilt, some fifty years since, remains of a monastic house were visible in its cellars.

The exterior and interior of the church are alike very striking, and the curious staircase tower added to the west side of the original tower is of particular interest, having been built on to the early Saxon tower in later and unsettled times, for the purpose of putting the church in a



BRIXWORTH CHURCH.

defensible condition against the forays of the Danish rovers then laying waste the country. The entrance was formerly by a door in the western face of the tower, but this semi-circular addition abolished all access that way. The upper stages and the spire are, of course, very much later, having in fact been built in the Decorated

style of the fourteenth century. Rude masonry and irregularly disposed herring-bone patterns of Roman tile form the walls.

The interior, as of most other Saxon churches, is more curious than beautiful, however archaeologically rare it may be. It consists nowadays of nave, chancel, semi-circular apse, and south chapel; but there were formerly narrow north and south aisles, as the walled-in nave arcades show. At what period these were destroyed does not appear. The apse is a modern rebuilding of the original, destroyed about 1460, but the ambulatory around it was not rebuilt. Large Gothic windows at various periods replaced the original Saxon small round-headed windows of the nave, but they have been abolished, and replicas of the Saxon work placed in their stead; which, however pleasing to sticklers for uniformity in matters architectural, was archaeologically a crime demanding the penalty of *peine forte et dure*, or something especially excruciating. To destroy a genuine Decorated or Perpendicular window for the purpose of inserting a modern "Saxon" one—probably framed in with specially made "Roman" tiles—is distinctly Grimthorpiam, and not playing the game according to the rules understood by the most enlightened. Recent excavations have brought to light the bases of Roman columns in the churchyard and in the church itself, and in short, ever since about a century ago, when people grow curious about antiquities, the building has been a kind of archaeological lucky-bag. You

scrape the plaster off a pier and discover a stone sculptured with a Roman eagle; disregarding spiders and immemorial dust, you thrust a hand into an ancient hole in the nave wall, and lo, out comes a reliquary containing the "Adam's apple" that once wagged in the holy throat of Bishop Boniface. In fact, anything is possible at Brixworth :

More broken pans, more gods, more mugs,
Old snivel-bottles, jordans, and old jugs,

as Peter Pindar might say; while many intimate anatomical belongings of the saints are doubtless even yet secreted on the premises.

The road in the centre of Brixworth street dips down steeply in a tree-shaded hollow, and is very narrow, with stone walls on either side. In one of these may still be seen, recessed slightly, the spring representing "Bartlet's Well," opened in 1631 by Margaret Bartlet "for the use of travellers." But although the spring is in going order, I observe that the travellers who pass this way prefer the tipple kept at the inn, hard by.

Two miles and a half ahead, and then less than a quarter of a mile to the right hand, lies Lamport, but so hidden that none would suspect its existence. The wayside "Swan" inn, opposite the by-road, derives its sign from the swan crest of the Ishams, the ancient owners of Lamport (whose name, by the way, is pronounced I-sham, not Ish-am). Lamport is a village of whose kind there are still, happily, many hundreds in England, in spite of the hurry and fever of the age. It is

small, it is beautiful in a mild way, it is quiet, and no celebrated or merely notorious person has ever done it the honour to be born within its bounds. A little more beauty, a slight connection with history, and it would become a place of resort. I suspect that this something less than a quarter of a mile remove from the road must in these latter days be a profound source of congratulation to the inhabitants, who live, by virtue of it, "the world forgetting and by the world forgot," or at least by those undesirables who thunder along the main road in motor-cars, enveloped, and enveloping others, in clouds of dust. Such an one passed me on the road, equipped with some damnable new contrivance in place of the usual horn: a shrieking something like a soul in torment. As the yelling abomination died away and the dust began to settle down, and the trees could again be seen and the birds heard, I wondered why such things could be permitted to exist.

Lamport church stands by the wayside, and opposite is Lamport Park, the seat of the Ishams. The Hall, though by no means remarkable for its architecture, is curious by reason of the family mottoes and pious sentiments carved on the exterior, by which you gather that the Ishams have always been amiable persons, and prone to find amusement in small things. Even their name seems ever to have afforded them a perennial source of enjoyment. It suggested to some remote forbear the idea of a punning Latin motto,

Ostendo non ostento; Englished as “I show I sham not.” This is duly set forth along the front of the Hall, together with “In respect of things eternal, life is vayn and mortal,” and “In things transitory resteth no glory.”

Most amiable of all this amiable race was the late Sir Charles Isham, who did indeed give



LAMPORT CHURCH.

Lamport a kind of minor celebrity. I think he was the gentlest and courtliest of creatures, who, if indeed he left the world in no respect better than he found it, at least left it none the worse, and, ending at a ripe old age a rather aimless life, was regretted in perhaps a derogatory way as “a harmless old gentleman.” Thus lived and died the tenth Baronet, defeating the superstition that all baronets are bad.

For over forty years he busied himself in constructing a miniature rock-garden at one side of the Hall. Amid boulders piled up to represent a mountain-range, with gullies, rock-pools and caves, he planted dwarf-trees and rare shrubs of the stunted kind the Japanese know so well how to grow; and there he placed among the caves and on the miniature cliffs, groups of little gnomes: fairy miners, with wheelbarrows and pickaxes, with the verse:

Eight hours' work,
Eight hours' play,
Eight hours' sleep,
And eight bob a day.

Day after day he would sit contemplating this life-work, with one of his pet hawks on his wrist, and his tame owls in the holes he had constructed for them overhead. And now the hawks and the owls are gone, and the rock-garden is uncared for.

In Lamport church a monumental brass with long inscription to his wife reveals the man he was:

Emily
Wife of the
tenth Baronet
commenced real life
Sept. 6th, 1898, aged 74 years,
after an union of 51 years with her
thankful husband, who through spiritual light
finds that joy is triumphant over grief.
Thoughtful towards others,
Kindness itself,
Beloved by all,
At her dear wish is added
this Message,—
“Bear ye one another's burdens.”

The last words were : "I'm dying" No ! my wife, This is the Portal of the Higher Life :

I spoke no more, and neither did I weep. Next morn at nine she passed in sweetest sleep.

Sleep on ! Sleep on, my Dearest ; sleep your best ; After such years of weariness now rest.

Or are you full awake ? It may be so ; Or in some happy dream-land ? who doth know,

That home-made elm casket deftly wrought, Betokens love : also inspired the thought.

Although at times we might not quite agree, All knew I lived for you, and you for me.

Oh ! lovely Lamport, now she's gone from here, I have consigned thee to my cousin Vere.

I spake these words in truth, I SHOW I SHAM NOT, Isham I am, and Isham yet I am not.

The second motto "IN THINGS TRANSITORY RESTETH" (and not without some truth) "NO GLORY,"

But still, may gifts from Heaven on thee rest, And thus that house be glorified and blest.

Whatever there may still remain of life, At night and morn I contemplate my wife,

And at the time appointed may we meet, And her sweet Spirit be the first to greet.

Reader, observe, the life inscribed above, Evinced much happiness, more pain, most love.

CHARLES EDMUND survived his beloved until
April 7, 1903, aged 83.

This also is his monument, he objects to more.

The living of Lamport is held jointly with that of Faxton, a good three miles away : a place with no road to it for the best part (or ? "worst part") of one of those three miles. Why, then, does the explorer explore in such forbidding circumstances ? Aye, why indeed ? I ask myself as, quartering a succession of phenomenally water-logged meadows in search of spots free from the fathomless mud, I make slow and pain-

ful progress, horribly aware that the way I have come is the only route back. Well, there is a reason in all things; even in this. In Faxton church there is a monument to Sir Augustine Nichols, Justice of the Common Pleas, who formerly resided here, and was poisoned in 1616, when on circuit at Kendal, by four women, to prevent him passing sentence of death on one



FAXTON.

of their relatives. Another monument is in Kendal church, where he is buried.

The effigy of him is kneeling at a desk, and on either side he is supported by figures representing Justice and Fortitude, with Temperance and Prudence above. Justice once held her appropriate scales, but they have been broken off. The villagers, to whom classic imagery was unknown, were firmly convinced that the scales

represented the weighing of the poison that put an end to the judge.

The little church of St. Denis, Faxton, stands on the edge of a wide, common-like expanse



MONUMENT TO JUDGE NICHOLS.

showing many traces of old foundations of buildings, and bordered by half-a-dozen cottages, most of them far gone in decay and deserted. There is no semblance at all of any roadway into the

place. The church itself is rotting with damp and mildew, and giant fungoid growths, unreal and fantastic-looking as the imaginings of pantomime, fasten themselves upon its walls, and heave up the stones of the floor. An afternoon service every Sunday more than fulfils the needs of the few inhabitants. But the church, of the interesting period between the Early English and Decorated styles, shows many traces of beauty, and there are finely sculptured corbels, an ancient font, and a sand-table—on which, in the quaint educational methods of over a century ago, children were taught to form the letters of the alphabet with finger-tips in the sand.

Returning to the main road from the muddy hazards and chances of Faxton, a steep descent leads down to the railway level-crossing at Lamport station, and thence steeply up again to the crest of Hopping Hill, where a “Traveller’s Rest” in the form of an elaborate wooden seat stands on the grass, inscribed, “Rest ye, wearie traveller. Jubilee, 1897. Reginald Loder.” It was the squire of the adjoining Maidwell Hall who placed the seat. They do not all jubilate who rest here, for I perceive the inscription, among others, “Sat here, pennyless, June 1st, 1906. J. West, stoney-broke. Pray for me.”

A fine elm avenue conducts into the well-cared-for village of Maidwell, and thence out again. On the left hand is Kelmarsh with church floridly restored and its chancel elaborately lined with beautiful (but incongruous) marbles which

the squire, one Naylor, brought home in his yacht from old villas in Rome. At a loss what to do with them, he eventually gave them to the church. He lies outside, in the churchyard, under a tomb of polished granite of the gigantesque and vulgarian orders of architecture. All other tombstones have been abolished, and he lies in a solitude that looks truly imperial.

Away on the left, three miles and a half distant, is the field of Naseby, on the ridge yonder, crowned by the obelisk for remembrance. There, on that lofty plateau, on June 13th, 1645, in shock of battle, the cause of King Charles was finally ruined, and the pursuit that followed the fight tailed away in slaughter towards the north-west. The unfortunate King showed to better advantage at Naseby than at almost any other period in his career. Clad completely in armour, he was in the thick of the fight, and would have rallied his disheartened cavalry for a last effort, had he not been restrained. "Face about once more: give one charge more and recover the day," he cried, and was placing himself in advance, when the Earl of Carnwath laid his hand upon the bridle of his horse, and restrained him. "Will you go upon your death in an instant," he said, and turned the horse's head into the flight that then became general. It is a fine incident, but it had been better, after all, had the Earl let the unhappy King have his way, and go to his death in arms for his cause.

The road, descending from Kelmarsh by Clip-

ston railway station, passes the unremarkable village of Oxendon, and thence comes into the growing town of Market Harborough, where we finally leave the district of the good Northants building-stone and come across the river Welland, into the clays of Leicestershire, and towns and villages of red brick.

XX

LEICESTERSHIRE is pre-eminently a hunting county. To name the Quorn among hounds is to name the best known, and to mention Melton Mowbray is to name the metropolis of fox-hunting; while the hunting-field is so largely composed of peers that the rustics commonly address the wearer of pink as "my lord," leading to the well-known retort of a sporting commoner that they "don't know a gentleman when they see him."

It is the county of pork-pies, and once claimed to rear the largest sheep and grow the heaviest fleeces. Not so much has been said of Leicestershire as an industrial county, but its hosiery trade is the largest in England. Despite the stockingers, the bootmakers, and in some districts the coal-miners, Leicestershire is nevertheless a very agricultural and rural county. "Bean-belly" Leicestershire Drayton calls it, and there is a "Barton-in-the-Beans" near Gopsall; but there is, on the other hand, also a "Barton-in-Fabis," or "Barton-in-the-Beans," in Nottinghamshire. The corollary of being "bean-bellied" seems to be dull-witted;



MARKET HARBOROUGH.

but, if we are to judge from Leicestershire folklore, the people are gifted with exceptional humour, of the saturnine kind, as witness this reproof to the boastful :

If all the waters wer one sea,
 And all the trees wer one tree,
 And this here tree was to fall into that there sea,
 My sakes ! what a splish-splash there *would* be !

And here is another example :

Yew thowt, did 'ee ? Aiy,
 'Yew thowt a lig,
 Loike Hudson's pig.

" Like Hudson's pig ? "

" Yais. 'Niver hard on 'em, 'a s'pose ? "

" No."

" Whoy, 'a thowt, th' silly feller, as they wer a-gwine ter *kill* 'en, and they wuz on'y arfter putten a ring trew 'is noaze."

There is a tragical variant of this, in which " Joe Stokes's " pig is the unfortunate hero—" Ye're loike Joe Stokes's pig : 'e thowt as how 'e wer a-gwine ter hev 'is brekfuss, but they wuz a-gwine ter mek poark on 'en."

The days when Market Harborough was a little market-town, interested in nothing else but agriculture and hunting, are done. It is now, indeed, a busy little place, and, with its various industrial enterprises, not so little as it was. Chief of these is Symington's corset factory, employing 580 hands; but elsewhere may be noticed manufactories of rubber soles and heels, pea-flour, and

numerous other articles of commerce. Its remarkably broad chief street, where the cattle-markets and the October Fair have been held for many centuries, is still, however, on ordinary days singularly empty ; and now that a Cattle Market, costing £28,000, has been built, is less characteristic than of old. But it is a magnificent picture, this of Harbro town, that unfolds itself before the traveller as he comes in along the road. There, peaking up grandly, are the exquisite tower and crocketed spire of the ancient church, very lovely and worshipful, with the old timber-framed Grammar School humbly beneath, founded in 1614 by Robert Smyth, an old City of London official, its sides decorated with plaster panels and its stout timbers adorned with pious mottoes : the open space beneath designed for use as the Butter Market.

The church is dedicated to St. Dionysius the Areopagite. No one need be very greatly ashamed of not knowing precisely what that was, by way of a profession. The Oblate Fathers suggest a problem in Euclid, and to be an Areopagite suggests a performer on the flying trapeze ; but really St. Dionysius was not so flighty a character. He was the judge of the Areopagus in Athens, before whom St. Paul disputed on the subject of worshipping the Unknown God, and whom he converted. Dionysius became Bishop of Athens, and suffered martyrdom in A.D. 95.

The interior of the great building disappoints

expectations aroused by the beauty of the outward view.

It was not until 1614 that this became the parish church of the town. Magnificent though it be, it was formerly only a “chapel-of-ease,” and the mother-church was that of St. Mary-in-Arden, a mile distant. The remains of that church may yet be seen, in its grim, crowded, and disused churchyard, woefully overhanging the railway sidings, busy night and day, and noisy always.

I thought the dead had peace, but it is not so,

as Tennyson says.

Here the inquisitive stranger may find the epitaph of “Susanna Wells, Cook of the Three Swans in Market Harborough, Forty-one Years. She died 19 June 1774. Aged 59 Years.” A simple calculation proves that she began to cook early. I had rather have partaken of the cooking of her fifty-eighth year than of her eighteenth.

In two miles from Market Harborough, as proclaimed by the milestones—which spell the name of the town and Leicester, “Harbro” and “Lester”—one comes to Gallow Hill, with a fragment of old road, rugged and sunken, on the right hand, where the highwaymen used to lurk under the shadow of the gibbet-tree. At the cross-roads below stands what was once an inn, now divided into squalid tenements; and on the tall ridge to the right stand the villages of East, or Church, Langton, Thorpe Langton, and Tur-

Langton, remarkable for the doings of a former incumbent.

William Hanbury, born 1725, died 1778, rector of East Langton early in the time of George III., was a forceful person. He became rector in 1753, his father, a wealthy man, having purchased the advowson ; but he had already, two years earlier, begun his huge planting operations in the neighbourhood. He introduced plants and seeds from all parts of the world, but was particularly enthusiastic in the cultivation of fruit-trees, and the neighbourhood is still, as a result of his labours, and the example he set, exceptional in fruit-growing. In 1758 he wrote and published “An Essay on Planting, and a Scheme for Making it Conducive to the Glory of God and the Advantage of Society.” He was a man of ideas that grew steadily larger and more impracticable. The first proposal, to annually dispose of the produce of the fruit-trees and thus to create a fund of £1,500, of which the interest was to provide for the decoration of the church, developed into a plan for amassing a £4,000 fund for the building of a hospital and schools, and this in its turn became a grandiose scheme for a series of Church Musical Festivals to be held in the surrounding districts. The income from all these sources was to accumulate until it reached a total sum sufficient to produce an income of £10,000 or £12,000, which was to be expended in founding a minster, a choral establishment, a public library, picture-galleries, a hospital, schools, a printing office, and

many other things. The minster was to be in relation to all other cathedrals what cathedrals are to chapels. A central tower was to rise to a height of 493 feet, and its other dimensions were to be in proportion : the western towers themselves to be 399 feet high. No other cathedral that ever was, or would be, should rival this. St. Paul's? Pooh! The most magnificent buildings yet known were to be squalid beside its walls, floors, and columns of marble, and the porphyry and jasper that were to decorate its choir.

A city, so this odd projector anticipated, would spring up around these institutions, and included in it were to be, in his own words, “two pompous inns.” If any difficulty were experienced in the carriage of building materials, a canal from quarries in the neighbourhood of Stamford was to be dug to Market Harborough, and if possible the quarries of Ketton and Weldon were to be purchased.

When he anticipated all these things would come to pass does not appear. A capital sum of at least a quarter of a million sterling would be required, to yield the income he considered sufficient: and you could not, even with £12,000 per annum, make much headway with such a cathedral, to say nothing of these expensive side-shows.

In 1770, the income of the trust was £190 17*s.*; and by 1863 it had risen to £900, when the trustees successfully applied to the Court of Chancery to vary the trust deed, for the purpose

of expending a sum of £5,000 upon necessary repairs to the three Langton churches, and of applying a further sum to school purposes.

The church of Church Langton is a massive Early English structure on a large scale, containing monuments of this singular projector and successors of his kin. It has been very thoroughly renovated from the funds released by sanction of the Court. Hanburys still preside here.

There is a good deal of interest in the immediately surrounding country. Away across the meadows on the other side of the road are Foxton Locks, on the Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Union Canal. Every visitor to Harbro hears of Foxton Locks, and is bidden go see them; and indeed they are remarkable achievements in modern engineering, putting those of the old canal engineers to the blush. They are visible quite a long way off, looking like the gear at the mouth of a colliery, and consist of an elevated engine-house installed with powerful machinery that raises or lowers the modern lock—practically a large tank—with barges floating in it. This replaces the remarkable old series of ten locks that scale the hill like some Jacob's ladder, and are now discarded. The new lock, completed in 1898 at a cost of £37,000, was undertaken for the purpose of saving water, wasted in large quantities in the old order of things, but a great deal of time is also incidentally saved by the new methods.

Proceeding again along the road, the church

tower of Kibworth appears among clustered woods on a height above the railway station of that name. The Midland Railway and other moderns call the place "Kibworth" merely, but it is properly Kibworth Beauchamp, while adjoining is the infinitely more handsome twin-village of Kibworth Harcourt, which, however, has no church of its own.

A quaint memorandum in the register of Kibworth Beauchamp, under date of 1641, seems to have been made by the parson as the readiest means of absolving himself from blame for not properly keeping his books. It runs :

"Know all men that the reason why little or nothing is registered from this year 1641 until the year 1649, was the Civil Wars between Charles and his Parliament, which put all into a confusion till then; and neither minister nor people could quietly stay at home for one party or the other."

There is a suspicion, in the wording of this, that the parson was heartily sick of both sides.

The Rev. James Beresford was presented to the living by Merton College, and held it for very many years, dying in 1840, aged seventy-seven. He was author of a book on the "Miseries of Human Life," published in 1826, which, in spite of its doleful title, is not the work of one who has surveyed existence and found all to be vanity; but is cast in a humorous form, as humour was then understood. He possessed a pretty wit, and a quaint sarcastic manner, showing prominently in the story told of him and some junior fellows of Merton whom he observed prospecting over his

garden wall, in view of his possible decease, and the living falling vacant.

He went out to them and politely said, “Walk in, gentlemen, walk in and take stock, not only of the parsonage, but of the present incumbent. Most happy at all times to do anything to oblige you—except die.”

An epitaph in the churchyard to “Mr. Lewis Powel Williams, Surgeon,” who died in 1771, aged forty, declares “He was the first that Introduced into Practice; Inoculation without Preparation.” A similar claim is made at Worth Matravers, in Dorset, for Benjamin Jesty in 1774, but with the careful proviso that he was the first “known” to have practised it.

Glen Magna, three miles onward, more commonly known by the English form, “Great Glen,” is said by the villagers (of neighbouring villages) to contain “more dogs than honest men.” The sting of this saying is supposed to reside in the alleged fact that Great Glen has ever been singularly deficient in dogs. And so it remains to this day; and, so far as the observation of the present writer goes, the deficiency extends to houses and inhabitants as well. Great Glen, in short, is one of those many places that are great in name and ludicrously small in fact. The wayside church is almost all the wayfarer sees. It has a Norman south porch with carvings of weird horses whose tails stand erect over their backs, like Scotch pines: a kind of horse not known outside the region of nightmare.

At Oadby, in another two miles, the influence of the great and still rapidly growing town of Leicester begins to be felt. The old church stands in the centre of the village, and narrows the road almost into the semblance of a lane. The east window of the north aisle, looking upon the road, is of the Decorated period of Gothic and is enriched with the comparatively rare "ball-flower" moulding. An epitaph on three brothers and three sisters Davenport, "who lived together in a state of Celibacy in the same House 54 years, deservedly esteemed for their suitable demeanour and punctual integrity," and died in the years 1820-7, seems to show that their "race suicide" was more approved then than it would be now apostles of increase are raising their voices.

XXI

THE electric tramways run far out from Leicester, and in the town itself form a maze of lines that only the Leicester people themselves can readily understand. The long approach by the London road, composed as it is of the residential quarters of the wealthier classes, is the best of all the entrances, just as Belgrave, on the north, is the worst; but in the olden days this was "Gallowtree Gate," leading uphill from the hollow in which the town stands, to the place of execution. Here you pass the Victoria Park, and so come at length to the centre of the busy place, at the Clock Tower. But in 1600 the "London Waye,"

as Speed on his map of that date describes it, was the Welford Road, on the left hand, which, branching from our road at Northampton, and avoiding Harborough, came into Leicester in a mile and a half less. It led through the town by way of Higherross Street, North Bridge, and Frog Island. But Ogilby, in his *Britannia*, of seventy years later, gives the London road as now used.

The Clock Tower, the centre of modern Leicester, is what the Forum was to ancient Rome. Everything centres around it. Dr. Johnson said that the tide of London life ran most strongly at Charing Cross, and even more justly it may be said that the tide of Leicester's busy days eddies with greatest force at the Clock Tower. This is a particularly fine stone structure with spire, standing in the centre of the road where the five great thoroughfares of Gallowtree Gate, Belgrave Gate, Church Gate, Humberstone Gate, and High Street meet. It was built in 1868, as a tribute to the memory of four Leicester worthies: Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester; William of Wyggeston, the founder, in the early part of the sixteenth century, of the Wyggeston Hospital, whose money now also supports the Wyggeston Schools; Sir Thomas White, and Gabriel Newton, benefactors of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

Roman Leicester centred around the site of the mediaeval castle, some distance away, the Clock Tower standing outside the East Gate.

The antiquity of Leicester is indeed undoubted. Not only are the remains of the Romans numerous, and continually discovered in the course of building operations, but it is well known to have been the station of *Ratæ Coritanorum*, and here the Fosse Way and the so-called "Via Devana" meet. The Jewry Wall, so named from this quarter having



ST. NICHOLAS AND THE ROMAN WALL.

been that part of the mediæval town where the Jewish community lived, marks the western limit of *Ratæ*. It is a mass of brickwork, with a number of arched recesses, and remains to-day the chief visible relic of old Rome. The best-received opinions hold that this is a portion of the Roman West Gate, with fragments of a temple to Janus.

Ratæ, to have been so carefully and massively

walled, must have been a populous and a wealthy place, facts that seem additionally evident in the many fine tessellated pavements discovered at various times. There is an example on its original site here. They call it, on a notice-board, "the most beautiful tessellated pavement in the world," and charge you 2*d.* to see it, but that is an *ex parte* statement, and there is a better than the best a little way off, for which the appropriately higher charge of 3*d.* is made. Where the supremely bestest is to be seen, and at what cost, this chronicler dares not presume to say. The twopenny pavement is a private show, and the superlative example belongs, or did belong, to the Corporation. A curious modern history belongs to it. Discovered in 1832, in digging foundations for a house, it formed for many years the floor of a cellar. In 1890, the house was purchased by the Corporation, and then in 1896 came the Great Central Railway to Leicester, on its extension to London, with its embankment and arches, and abolished many things, among others a Quaker burial ground. The Quakers, therefore, lie nowadays very much deeper than those who laid them there ever contemplated; and at the same time the house with the Roman pavement was levelled. To move the pavement would have been to injure it, and in the end arrangements were made by which the railway company constructed a special room, lined with glazed white bricks; and there in this species of shrine it rests, while the trains roll overhead.

But to return to the Jewry Wall, hard by the Norman church of St. Nicholas. It is grimy with modern filth, but reverend in its age of some 2,000 years, and of giant strength, so that you cannot but smile at sight of the recent flimsy pillars of brick that "support" it, and are already themselves decrepit.

But the most interesting of all Leicester's relics of Roman Britain is stored in the Museum. This is the milestone discovered so long ago as 1771, on the Fosse Way, near Thurcaston, two miles from the town; on its original site, as the inscription on it proves. It is a cylindrical block of sandstone, rudely incised with a long, highly characteristic statement in a shockingly abbreviated and ill-spaced form, which, translated, runs, "During the Emperorship of the Divine, August, Most Great and Noble Caesar, Hadrian, son of the Divine, August, Most Great and Noble Trajan, Conqueror of Parthia, in the Fourth Year of his Tribunal Power: thrice Consul. To Ratæ, Two Miles."

I cannot withhold my astonishment, either at



THE ROMAN MILESTONE.

the miracles of condensed information displayed in this inscription, which outvies Pitman's, or any other, shorthand system; or at the diabolic cleverness of whoever first solved the problem it must have presented. It must have puzzled even a good many Roman travellers, and to-day looks very like a "Bill Stumps his mark" order of monument. The Romans evidently did not understand the first function of a milestone: to present clear and concise information. A modern milestone made in like manner, and inscribed: "During the Kingship of His Most Gracious Majesty Edward the Seventh, son of Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria, Conqueror of the Boer Republics, in the seventh year of his reign, Emperor of India. To Leicester, Two Miles"—would, it may be suspected, be the subject of unfavourable criticism.

It is not a little wonderful that this relic of an earlier civilisation has survived the rough usage that followed its discovery. It was removed to a garden close at hand, and would have been converted into a garden-roller, had it not been for the timeous intervention of Dr. Percy. A little later it narrowly escaped a worse fate, for it was claimed by one of the road commissioners, who would have had it broken up for road metal, had not public interest become aroused; with the odd result that this hoary relic was placed on a pedestal in midst of the town, crowned with a conical-shaped stone, and surmounted by—of all things—a lamp-post!

Thus it remained until 1814, when, having been nearly ruined by exposure to the elements, and to wanton mischief, it was removed to its present home.

Ratæ suffered under fire and sword when the protection of the Romans was withdrawn, and lay, the charred funeral pyre of its inhabitants, for long years, the Saxons, after their custom, settling outside the ruined place, alike for sanitary and superstitious reasons. They called their settlement Leir-ceastre, after the original British name, Caer Leir, and thus the name of *Ratæ* disappeared, save in historical records ; becoming the “Leicester” of our day ; the “Less-ess-tare” of French visitors, who cannot reconcile the spelling of the name with its pronunciation of “Lester.”

The claim of Leicester having been the home of King Lear is based merely on the phonetic likeness of his name to that of the British town.

The place had a new era of troubles when, in their turn, the Anglo-Saxons decayed and a more virile race invaded the land. Then Leicester fell a prey to the Danes, whose settlements may be traced at this day in the characteristic ending of Leicestershire place-names in the syllable “by,” peculiar to places of Danish origin : Oadby, Rearsby, Dalby, Sileby, and many others.

The old churches of Leicester are fairly numerous, and very interesting. St. Nicholas' was built in Saxon and early Norman times, chiefly from the materials of the Roman wall, by whose remains it stands. Here Leicester is seen in its

latest development, the neighbourhood having been cut up and largely rebuilt since the advent of the Great Central Railway. There remained until that event a curious street at the side of St. Nicholas, known as "Holy Bones," but in the great clearances "Holy Bones" disappeared, and only gaunt remains of houses and factories mark the site of it. The name arose from a great find of bones here, supposed to be relics of sacrifices made in the Temple of Janus. Their sanctity, seeing that they are thought to be the bones of oxen, has been challenged.

St. Mary de Castro, whose spire is one of the most prominent landmarks of the town, is unquestionably the finest church, but extraordinarily dark. It is Norman, Early English, and Decorated, and has two naves. But an architectural account of St. Mary's would occupy many pages. I like to think how here, in this very building, Henry the Sixth, at the time only five years of age, but already four years a king, passed the midnight vigil that formed part of a new knight's probation. With him, forty others were received into the ranks of chivalry. How many of them survived the bloody Wars of the Roses that raged in after years around the person of that unhappy King?

St. Margaret's, down in the low-lying, soggy Church Gate, is not, in its present form, the oldest church, having been rebuilt in the Perpendicular period, but it is the successor and representative of the mother-church of the town, built about

A.D. 600, when Leicester was the seat of a Saxon bishop. It stands not so far from the site of Leicester Abbey, and the street of "Sanvey Gate," at the corner, indeed derives its name from "Sancta Via," having been the way by which the mediæval religious processions came and went.



ST. MARGARET'S.

The great imposing tower, built from the proceeds of a tax of "Smoke Farthing," levied on the domestic hearths of the parish, is now a very weathered and crumbling mass, but all the more venerable-looking ; and when the proposed restoration has taken place, it is to be feared that much of the majesty of it will have vanished until such time as the surrounding factories have deposited

more soot. But that will take a considerable time, for Leicester is not a sooty place.

For an example of thorough and unsparing restoration we must turn to St. Martin's. Strangers, gazing at the exterior and the tall broach spire, imagine they have before them a new structure, but it is chiefly an Early English building, and, as the interior proves, a very fine one, and built on the site of a Roman temple to Diana. An epitaph of strange human interest is seen by the south porch :—

“ Enquiring mortal, whoe'er thou art, ponder here on an incident which highly concerns the whole progeny of Adam. Near this place lieth the body of John Fenton, who fell by violence May 17th, 1778, and remains a sad example of the incompetency of judicial institutions to punish a Murderer. He left to mourn his untimely fate a mother, a widow, and two children. These, but these alone, are greatly injured: personal security received a mortal wound when vengeance was averted from his assassin by the sophistical refiners of natural justice.”

The man who slew Fenton was one François Soulés, a French officer then prisoner-of-war at Leicester, who was at the time a guest in Fenton's house. The affair took place in a quarrel over a game of billiards. Soulés was condemned to death, but the sentence was revised, and he was in the end acquitted.

All Saints' is chiefly interesting from the curious clock over the south porch, originally set

up about 1610, removed in 1875, and in 1900 restored and replaced. So not all restoration is to be reprobated. Time, *edax rerum*, is represented on it, with his scythe, and above, in two little tabernacles, are a couple of miniature Jacks-smite-the-Clock, in the costume of James the First's time, who strike the quarters.

The Collegiate Church of St. Mary, in the Newarke, founded in 1331 by Henry, Earl of Lancaster, in conjunction with his magnificent Hospital of the Blessed and Undivided Trinity, has utterly disappeared, and with it, by all accounts, the grandest architectural work Leicester ever possessed. “Knights and Squires commended it as being the most fairest they had ever seen.” I like that old phrasing: by “most fairest” something supremely fair must surely have stood here. But the old Knights and Squires had not, it may be supposed, seen everything, and their testimony is not conclusive. Every one who has read ancient accounts of fine churches knows that each one was the finest, and makes allowances accordingly.

But it *was* very fine. The Reformation did well in many ways, but it did not so in the destruction of St. Mary’s, whose only fragments may now be seen in a cellar.

Henry, Earl of Lancaster, ancestor of Henry the Fourth, founded church and Hospital in the four acres of ground adjoining the Castle. He surrounded them with a wall and a defensible gateway—the “Magazine Gateway,” as it is now called.

By Hospital, of course, we understand almshouse. It was designed, oddly enough, for fifty infirm old men, and five women as nurses. The Hospital, "restored" in 1776, was again restored, and very largely rebuilt, in 1902; the work excellently well done. Interesting relics of ancient days are preserved in the hall. There stands the so-called "Duke of Lancaster's Porridge-pot," a fine bell-



TRINITY HOSPITAL PORRIDGE-POT.

metal cauldron of sixty-one gallons capacity, whence the Hospitallers were helped. What a capacity for porridge! Others more or less resembling it are found in England, notably the Nuns' Cauldron at Laycock Abbey, Wiltshire.

In the hall is also to be seen "Queen Elizabeth's Pocket Piece," a salt-box or nutmeg-grater dated 1579, inscribed "This belongeth to the Olde Ospitall"; and with the moral maxims: "Thinke

◦ wel ◦ and ◦ say ◦ wel ◦ bvtrather ◦ do ◦ wel ” ; and
“ Flee ◦ idilness ◦ and ◦ be ◦ wel ◦ occupied.”

In the chapel is the finely robed effigy of Mary de Bohun, mother of Henry the Fifth.



ST. MARY'S.

Seven morions and a number of breastplates, with a group of halberds disposed upon the walls, once belonged to the Town Watch, and are reliques of the way in which Leicester was policed in Good Queen Bess's glorious days.

The Newarke is changing, like all else. A

sign of the times is the new Technical School on the site of St. Mary's. But that is a striking view as you enter by Wyggeston's Chantry House, and see the spire of St. Mary de Castro behind one of the old Castle arches. The Castle is a mere memory now, and where the Keep stood is at this time a bowling-green ; but the Great Hall remains, where Parliaments met in 1414, 1426, and 1450 ; in those days when the Legislature was a more or less perambulating body, following the King to heel, like a dog. Faced nowadays with brick, none would suspect the antiquity of the Great Hall, now used as an Assize Court.

The natural pendant to the Assize Court is, of course, the Gaol ; but that is removed by the length of a long street from the place of judgment. In it is stored the Leicester gibbet, last used in 1832, when one Cook, a bookbinder, who carried on business in a yard off Wellington Street, was hanged for a peculiarly revolting murder. A Mr. Paas, of London, a manufacturer of brass ornaments used in the bookbinding trade, had been accustomed to call upon him, and Cook, expecting his visit, had evidently prepared to murder him for sake of the gold he carried. The unfortunate man put up at the "Stag and Pheasant" inn, and, saying he would soon return, made his call upon Cook the last of the day. He was never again seen alive. Cook appears to have killed him with the iron handle of his press, afterwards hacking his body in pieces and burning it on an immense fire. His story of a

quarrel, and of accidentally killing Mr. Paas, was, in view of the preparations he had made—of laying in an unusual quantity of coal, having a hatchet re-ground, and giving his errand-boy a holiday—not believed; and eventually he pleaded guilty and posed as a contrite sinner. After he had been duly hanged, his body was gibbeted in Saffron Lane, on the outskirts of the town. The spectacle seems to have been popular, according to the following testimony :

“ LEICESTER, Aug. 12.—Our town is like a fair to-day, with the people who are come to see Cook hanging in chains. He was put up yesterday afternoon, at four o’clock, when all the market people flocked in thousands to see the sight, and continued going all the night. To-day they are coming from the villages all round; some have walked as far as fourteen miles. Last night there were ginger-bread and other stalls at the place, but the mayor has put a stop to all that. It is not far from our new county gaol, which perhaps you remember. His brother says his body shall not hang long, but it would be no easy matter to remove it. It hangs about 35 feet from the ground, and is dressed in the same clothes as when he was hanged. We hear his bowels have been taken out, to try the experiment of burning them. It is currently reported his father has died to-day of a broken heart. I think it is very likely to be true, as he was very ill last week. The Ranters have been preaching under the gibbet this morning, before breakfast,

and will again to-night. It is thought there were 40,000 people to see him hanged, but there will be many more to see him now hanging, if they continue to come as they do to-day."

Riots followed, and the body was speedily removed. Two years later, the custom of gibbeting, or hanging in chains, was abolished by statute, chiefly owing to the disgraceful scenes enacted here.

XXII

RICHARD III., "as every schoolboy knows," marched out from Leicester to defeat and death at Bosworth, but he did not march forth from the Castle, even then dilapidated. He slept—or, as Shakespeare would have it, his guilty conscience refused to let him sleep—the night before the battle at the "Blue Boar" inn.

Two days later, his body, flung ignominiously across the back of a horse, was brought back, and exposed publicly to view in the Hall of the Guild of Corpus Christi, and was then buried without any ceremony in the Greyfriars Church. There it remained for fifty years, until the destruction of the religious houses caused the remains of all who lay there to be cast away. Bow Bridge, crossing the river Soar near by, was replaced by the present iron bridge in 1862, and on it may be seen the inscription, "Near this spot lie the remains of Richard III., the last of the Plantagenets."

The Corporation of Leicester has an ancient and honourable history, and has included in the many centuries of its existence a number of public-spirited men. "Many centuries" truly it is that the Corporation has existed, for the time is not known, since Leicester was Leicester, when there was not a Corporation. There was, however, no Mayor, so-styled, until 1251.

The Town Hall that served the purpose from 1563 until 1876, when the great modern building was completed, still stands, hard by St. Martin's Church, with which in fact it was closely associated, having been originally the home of a religious fraternity—the Corpus Christi Guild. The Mayor's Parlour, built in the time of Charles the First, panelled with bog oak, remains, as also does the public hall, with timber roof, like a boat reversed. The building was self-contained to the minutest particulars, for adjoining the Parlour where the Worshipful the Mayor took his ease, was, and is, the cell where petty malefactors found what ease they might until justice, as then understood, dealt with them. A very full and complete account might be written of the old Town Hall, for the records concerning it are full and precise, but they lack confirmation of the tradition that Shakespeare himself acted with Richard Burbage's company of players here. Mayor, aldermen, and common councillors were not averse from merrymaking, and we have accounts of the mafficking that took place here to celebrate the defeat of the Armada, when the Town Waits were had into

the gallery and discoursed on pipe and tabor, and the town went wild with joy, and fell on each other's necks and wept, by which it seems that the glories of Mafeking Night in the twentieth century had their counterpart in the sixteenth. And a good thing, too; for when we cease to rejoice in victory we shall be a pitiful folk indeed. What the pro-Spaniards thought of it all is not recorded.

The old town library, adjoining, in what was once the Chantry House belonging to the Guild of Corpus Christi, was founded in 1632, chiefly from books until then belonging to St. Martin's Church, and remains practically a museum of ancient devotional manuscripts and early printed works.

The modern Town Hall, eminently characteristic of the architecture that came into so extraordinary a vogue in the 'seventies and was completed in 1876, is of course in the style called "Queen Anne," and largely in red brick. So greatly has the municipal business of Leicester grown that it is already much too small; but it is one of the most tasteful buildings of the kind in the country, and designed more with a view to excellence of detail than of the flamboyant eccentricity that has later prevailed. The design of the Crown Court is especially beautiful, in the restrained way, and even in the detail of the finely imagined decorative iron railings of the gardens in Town Hall Square this rare artistic quality is seen.

It will be judged from all the foregoing that Leicester is a large and busy place. It now numbers 215,000 inhabitants, engaged chiefly in



IN THE COURTYARD, THE OLD TOWN HALL.

the making of boots and shoes and hosiery. With a well-deserved Radical reputation—Leicester ever was Radical, even before it made boots—the Corporation now owns the Water, Gas, Electricity,

and Tramways undertakings and makes them all pay a profit in relief of rates. Indeed, they do things on a business footing. In the public libraries of other towns where the betting news in the newspapers is discouraged, it is simply blacked out, but here it is neatly pasted over with local advertisements, and from them the Library garners in a modest income of between £20 and £30.

In every way this is very different from what John Evelyn, writing in 1654, calls “the old and ragged City of Leicester.” In his time it was “large and pleasantly seated, but despicably built, the chimney-flues like so many smiths’ forges.” But it is within the last decade that Leicester has suddenly rebuilt itself. It had grown enormously, but the ancient central streets were until then obviously ancient. Now they are Twentieth Century streets, in all—in the way of gigantic and highly ornate frontages with show-shops—that the expression indicates.

The growth of industrialism has wrought this marvellous change. History—a fine stirring history—the town has, but towns cannot live on the memory of times past. For the first small beginnings of modern Leicester you must trace back to 1680, when one Alsop began—not brewing—but stocking-weaving, in a small way. He prospered, and his success attracted others, and thus the “ragged old Citty” that Evelyn saw was first set upon its march to modern greatness. But I do not see, anywhere, a statue to that original

stockinger. In a century from that time the trade of town and shire in hose was the largest in the world. The total population of Leicester was then only 14,000, and of these 6,000 were stocking-weavers.

In recent times Leicester had a reputation for cheap cotton hose and "side-springs." All the "*Jemimas*" in the kingdom came from Leicester, and the prototypes of Arthur Sketchley's porky "*Mrs. Brown at the Seaside*," and at half a hundred other places, and the fat old women pictured in the comic prints of 1860-1870, with their legs encased in white cotton stockings bulging over their "side-spring" boots, were fully furnished, as to coverings of legs and feet, from here. "*Jemimas*"—that is to say, "side-spring" boots—are no longer worn, but elastic webbing for other purposes continues to be a staple product.

Leicester became a boot and shoe manufacturing town in 1859. The trade began in a small way, but now employs close upon 40,000 people. Boots and shoes for women and children, and canvas shoes, are the kinds specially made. Fancy hosiery also is an important trade, and when jerseys were the fashion, about 1879, Leicester did very well. The blouse has probably come to stay, and Leicester rejoices in the prospect, for it has busy factories engaged in the production of them. In addition to these, and a host of minor industries, the stout tapestry fabrics used in upholstery, and particularly in the cushions

of railway carriages, are made almost exclusively here.

And lastly, it was at Leicester in 1841 that the idea of railway excursions first occurred to Thomas Cook; and from Leicester to Loughborough, a distance of $10\frac{3}{4}$ miles, the first excursion train and the first Cook's tourists set out, on July 15, 1841. The double journey cost a shilling and 670 excursionists took tickets.

The site of the great Abbey of Leicester, the place where Cardinal Wolsey died in 1530, on his way from York to London, where he would undoubtedly have been executed had he survived the journey, lies beside the river Soar—own brother to the Saar in Alsace, and the Suir in Ireland—which skirts the western and north-western sides of the town, and has always rendered it subject to floods.

You come to the site of Leicester Abbey by way of many hosiery factories, whence emerge the warm oily smells of wools and worsteds and the click-clack of machinery; and thence by Frog Island. The Abbey of St. Mary de Pratis, *i.e.* "St. Mary of the Meadows," stood, as its name indicates, by the water-meadows of this sluggish river. The site, with merely the old surrounding precinct wall, is alone left, and even the first secular mansion built there stands a roofless ruin.

Wolsey was under arrest, and worn with illness and misfortune, when he came here. In the words of Shakespeare :

At last with easy roads he came to Leicester,
Lodged in the abbey ; where the reverend abbot,
With all his convent, honourably received him ;
To whom he gave these words—“ O Father Abbot,
An old man, broken with the storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among ye ;
Give him a little earth, for charity.”

He died the third day of his arrival, in the sixtieth year of his age. On the second day, observing his custodian, the Lieutenant of the Tower, in the room, he said, “ Master Kyngston, I pray you have me commended to His Majesty. Had I but served God as I have served him, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs. But this is my just reward for my pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince.”

And thus died the proud Cardinal, before whom all in the land, except his Sovereign, had earlier abased themselves. They buried him in the Lady Chapel, but in another seven years the Abbey itself was dissolved, its lands seized, and the buildings themselves destroyed ; and no man knows what became of the body of Wolsey. Like that of Richard the Third, it was obscurely dispersed with others, and hence these two great historic characters have no known resting-place and no monument. The site was granted to a Mr. Cavendish, and on it in another thirty years was built the mansion whose ruins are now to be seen.

This way ran the old original road out of Leicester to the north, instead of the existing

road through Belgrave. The change, like that in the southern approach to the town, was due to the dread with which wayfarers in the early years of the seventeenth century regarded the place, sore stricken with the plague. They sought the byways and unfrequented paths outside the walls, and were careful not to enter the town itself. Traffic has ever been conservative, and when all fear of infection had at last died out, the new routes thus struck out were retained.

XXIII

CLIMBING steeply up out of the seething hollow where Leicester's busy population strives, the road in a mile and a half comes to the hundredth mile from London. It is quiet and solitary, the village of Wanlip, near by, not revealing its existence. But the neighbourhood of Rothley—*i.e.* Roth-ley, the red field—on the left hand is presently seen by the disgusting deshabille of the allotments. However economically and socially desirable they may be, allotment gardens have ever a squalid note. Rothley is growing vast and growing ugly, with cheap, flimsy buildings and a hard-working population of stockingers and quarrymen; and the march of the little hutes of provincial suburbia is advancing on Rothley Temple, that historic house in its beautiful park of stately trees where Thomas Babington Macaulay was born, October 25th, 1800, “in a room panelled from floor to ceiling, like every corner of the

ancient mansion, with oak almost black with age." It had been in the time of Queen Elizabeth the home of that Anthony Babington who in 1586 was executed for a wild and foolish plot to murder the Queen and to release the Queen of Scots : a conspiracy that not only failed, but sealed the fate also of the Scottish queen.

The name "Temple" indicates that this was formerly the site of a Preceptory of the Knights Templars, and adjoining the house is still a chapel including some remains of the Templars' church and an effigy of some unknown Crusader.

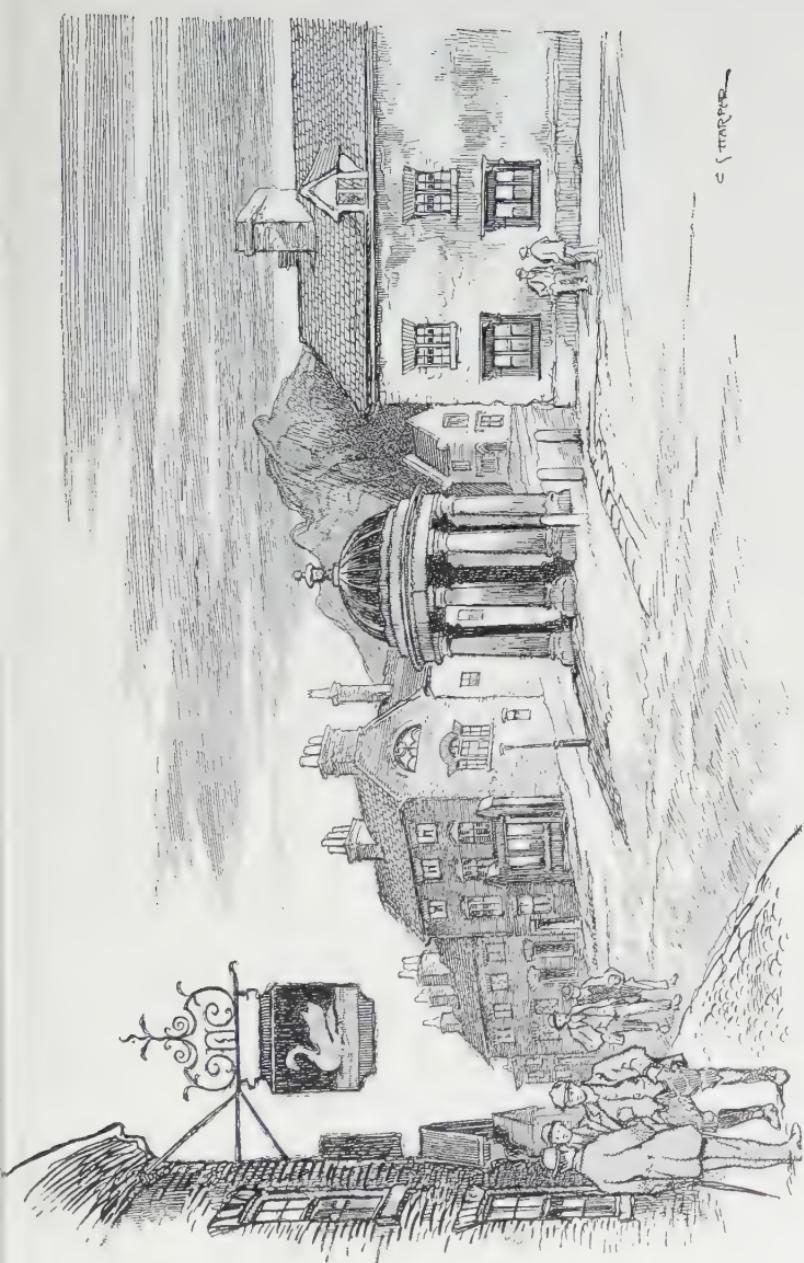
When raised to the Peerage in 1857 as Baron Macaulay, the historian sentimentally added "of Rothley," although, to be sure, he owned no property here. In 1859 he was dead. The place is thus doubly associated with the man who made history a romance, beside whose entralling pages the novels of the day when his History of England was new were flat and stale. Latter-day destructive critics have fallen foul of his style and reduced what they term "Macaulayese" to a formula in which the use of antithesis takes a prominent and mechanical part. Macaulay's style, however, remains the most brilliant exemplar of the oratorico-narrative method, and is not likely to suffer greatly at the hands of the unsympathetic.

Still, there is an extravagant note in the epitaph over his grave in Westminster Abbey : "His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth for evermore." Such language would be almost

extravagant if employed upon Shakespeare himself, and is fitting only for a Nelson or a Wellington.

The river Soar, lending its name to a number of neighbouring villages, is responsible for that of Mountsorrel, a lovely name ; but the district is full of the most impressive place-names. What a fine mouthful is “ Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake.” It must be a satisfaction to date one’s correspondence from a place like that. “ Thrumpton,” too : is that not fine ? Walton-on-the-Wolds has its merits, while there is an air of distinction about Groby, recognised centuries ago, when Lord Grey was “ Lord Grey of Groby.” But “ Barrow-on-Soar ” is not nice.

The great rock of Mountsorrel, a bold craggy height of syenite, or exceptionally hard granite, largely quarried for millstones and road-metal, gives its name to the village nestling beneath the crag. A castle once frowned upon the crest of it, but has long been a thing of the past. Even in Camden’s day it was but a heap of rubbish. In remote times a stronghold of the Earls of Leicester, and afterwards of Saher de Quincy, Earl of Winchester, its history is obscure, but it seems early to have been abandoned by those dignified nobles and occupied by bands of outlaws who levied toll upon wayfarers, and behaved so outrageously that at last the countryside was roused. “ In the year 1217,” according to Camden, “ the inhabitants of these parts pulled it down to the ground, as a nest of the devil, and a den of thieves and robbers.”



MOUNTSORREL.

C. STRAKER

An ancient legend told how the devil, on his way to Leicester, essayed the journey in three leaps. At Mountsorrel he mounted his sorrel horse, and made one leap to Wanlip: not an altogether insignificant performance, for the distance is three miles. Thence he sprang a mile further, to Birstall, where horse and rider were both burst with the force of their descent; but with his remaining strength he sprang another mile, to Belgrave, where, a mile short of Leicester, he was buried: and that is how Belgrave got its name. So now we know.

Let no one, charmed with the name of Mountsorrel, come to the place with high expectations of finding a picturesqueness to match. The romantic scenery of rugged rock looking down upon the pleasant valley of the Soar has been since 1845 the scene of quarry operations, and atrocious raw scars seam the mount on all sides; and beneath it, and for close upon a mile along the road, runs an abject townlet of the out-at-elbows, down-at-heel variety, with rows upon rows of mean cottages where many of the seven hundred quarrymen and their families dwell. That is modern Mountsorrel. Enfolded in midst of all these later developments, you still see vestiges of the Mountsorrel of from a hundred to three hundred years ago, when it was a village dependent for its existence solely upon the road. Still stands the “Black Swan”; although, to be sure, it now does little else but stand, being empty and forlorn. Even yet, relics of a happier day, the emble-

matic bunches of grapes hang from its eighteenth-century red-brick frontage, telling of the generous wine once dispensed within. The "White Swan," itself a house contemporary with its black brother, is more fortunate, and appears still to thrive.

Mountsorrel is precisely as described above, but it is a charming subject for a sketch. Standing on the cobblestoned footwalk by the "White Swan," you look across to the granite crag, to a group of old houses, and to the singular, temple-like market-cross that replaces the beautifully shafted Gothic cross removed in 1793. Sir John Danvers of Swithland, a neighbouring squire, afterwards Lord Lanesborough, coveted the cross for his park and offered to erect the existing building in exchange for it; and, the people of Mountsorrel agreeing, the thing was done.

Quorndon succeeds to Mountsorrel, at the interval of a mile and a half. Nowadays, and for many a year past, it has been docked of half its name, and is now "Quorn"; the seal having been set upon the practice by the style adopted for the Great Central Railway's station, "Quorn and Woodhouse." And thus are place-names debased. If the name of Quorndon were translated from the ancient Saxon whence it is derived, this would then be called Mill Hill, the "Quorn" coming from "quern," in the Middle Ages a hand-mill, but originally a mill of any kind. The original Quorndon must therefore have been a mill on the adjoining uplands.

Woodhouse itself lies away back in Charnwood

Forest, with the parish of Woodhouse Eaves adjoining; the “Eaves” in the name referring to its ancient situation on the edge, or “eaves,” of the Forest; although there have been those who derived it from the remarkable cavern, over whose roof the modern church is built.

The village of Quorndon, once and for long



CHURCH AND CAVERN, WOODHOUSE EAVES.

years the home of the famous Quorn Hunt, has since 1905 lost that distinction. The old kennels were then relinquished, and new built two miles away, at Barrow-on-Soar, a busy place of lime-works, with a church remarkable for a number of eccentric epitaphs on the Cave family, of which here below is an example :

Herein this Grave there lyes a Cave,
We call a Cave a Grave—
If Cave be Grave, and Grave be Cave,
Then, reader! judge, I crave,

Whether doth Cave here lye in Grave,
Or Grave here lye in Cave?
If Grave in Cave here buried lye,
Then 'Grave where is thy victorie?'
Go, reader, and report, here lyes a Cave
Who conquers Death and buries his own Grave.

One is curious to know what kind of men they were who wrote this sort of thing. Nothing seems to have been sacred to these funeral funny fellows and mortuary wags, who would start a conceit on false premisses, pursue it to its own death, and then worry it into rags.

It was about 1750 that Hugo Meynell, the "Father of Fox-hunting," purchased Quorn Hall and established the hounds, and he hunted and he hallooed for forty-eight years over a huge stretch of country from Market Harborough to the Trent—more than thirty miles across—so that there was scarce a bullfinch whose rails his horses' hoofs had not scraped in all this hunting territory. He knew the muddy bottom of many a ditch and had been souused in every stream before his hunting days were done and his son succeeded him as Master for a brief two years. Meynell not only established the Hunt, but made it pre-eminent, and Quorn was then—what with the lavish hospitality he dispensed at the Hall, and with the many hunting men who took up their quarters here—what Melton Mowbray is now, the metropolis of hunting. The village—or little town that it was for gaiety—was in fact too lively and too expensive for some, and it was this too great success that led to Melton arising in its stead:

[After H. Alken.]

THE CHASE AND THE ROAD.



an old-time sportsman discovering the then unknown sleepy old market-town and establishing himself there, for quiet and economy. Hunting men who have ridden to hounds in Leicestershire any time during the last sixty years or more will smile at the association of Melton with cheapness. Our exploratory sportsman of long ago had, however, made a great discovery. He found that Quorndon being in the centre of the Quorn Hunt, you must hunt, unless you be exceptionally energetic, almost exclusively with that pack; whereas from Melton, that town standing in the marches of other hunts, you might be loyal to your old love and yet take the field, day in and day out, with the Belvoir and the Cottesmore as well. And thus the fame and fortune of Melton grew.

This is no place to tell of the glories of the Quorn Hunt under Assheton-Smith, or Osbaldiston—"The Squire," as every one loved to call him; or the further splendours under Sir Richard Sutton, who, when asked why he hunted seven days a week, replied, "Because I can't hunt eight." The annals of the Hunt are extensive and the gossip endless, ranging through the whole gamut of sentiment: rising to Homeric laughter and sinking to the depths of mysticism, as when the older villagers tell you of the story, elderly when even they were young, of how Dick Burton, the huntsman, died and was buried in Quorndon churchyard, and how the hounds killed a fox on his grave at the close of the next hunting day.

The interior of Quorndon church is beautiful and exquisitely kept, particularly the Farnham Chapel, the property of the ancient Farnham family, seated at Quorndon for many centuries past, and still here. The chapel, only to be entered by favour, is filled with the elaborate monuments of bygone Farnhams, of which the most notable is that to John Farnham, Gentleman Pensioner to Queen Elizabeth, who died in 1587. He lies in life-sized effigy beside Dorothy his wife,



FROM THE MONUMENT TO JOHN FARNHAM.

and is habited in armour, with a representation by his side of the axe carried by the honourable corps of which he was a member, whose duties were to form a bodyguard to the Sovereign on public occasions. "Pensioner" appears to be a misleading term, the membership being honorary and entailing expense, rather than bringing payment.

John Farnham appears to have been also a kind of captain of free-lances, warring in the pay of foreign princes on the Continent. An alabaster

bas-relief on the wall of the chapel (like the tomb itself, recently restored) shows him leading his men on to the siege of a castle. A quaint epitaph in verse tells us something of what he was :

John Farnham here within this tombe enterred doth remaine,
whose life resigned up to God, the heavens his soul containe ;
and if you do desire to knowe his well deserved praiife,
go aske in court what life he ledd, and how he spent his days,
where princes great he truly served with whō he stood in grace,
for good conceit and pleasaunt wit favour'd in every place.
Beloved of the noblest forte, well liked of the rest,
unto his friend a faithfull friend, and fellowe to the best,
In warres he spent his youth, for youth the best expense of dais,
and did transfer from feild to Court his just rewarde of praiife.
Descended of an antient house, with honour ledd his life
only with one daughter blest, and with a vertuous wife.
God gave him here on earth to live twise fortie years and odd,
with life well spent he liveth now for aye with God.

XXIV

LOUGHBOROUGH, standing among ecclesiologists for bells, succeeds to Quorndon. The bell-founding firm of John Taylor & Sons, established here in 1840, is the birthplace of many of these instruments of the barbarous practice of bell-ringing that has survived into an otherwise civilised age, and here in 1881 was cast the monster bell of St. Paul's Cathedral, "Great Paul," whose hoarse growl—like a bell with bronchitis—is heard daily at one o'clock in the City of London. It is the largest bell in England, weighing $17\frac{1}{2}$ tons, and one of the most useless, being practically little else than the City man's luncheon bell. "Great

Paul," being too big for the railway bridges, was brought to London by road.

But there are other industries beside bell-founding at Loughborough. The ancient trade of bobbin-net making is still carried on, together with the hosiery and weaving and stocking-knitting that so thoroughly pervade Leicestershire and a good deal of Notts; and there are dye-works and engineering-shops too, a whole basketful of un-romantic but useful and mutually dependent trades: the extensive coal-trade of the town ministering to the engineering and other power-using factories, and the big breweries subsisting upon the magnificent thirsts produced by coal-grit and the heat of furnaces. It will be guessed from the foregoing that Lovely Loughborough is not a phrase by which the place can rightly be known. Only the narrow main street, where the old "Bull's Head" inn still exhibits a gallows sign stretching from side to side overhead, is at all removed from commonplace, and the broad market-place is lined with modern buildings in which many of the great number of Loughborough's flashily rebuilt inns that call themselves "hotels," and are really nothing but drinking shops, are situated.

One commonly finds that Loughborough enjoys —or perhaps that is not quite the right word; let us say endures—some of the coldest weather that the Meteorological Office reports in the winter. When a cold snap makes the whole country shiver, it will generally be found that, of all places in

England, Loughborough is the coldest. But *per contra*, the townsfolk say that it is also extremely hot in summer, and the parish register records in the summer of 1808 an exceptional *heat*:

“Wednesday, July 13th; the heat was so intense that in consequence thereof many People died, especially they that were at work in the fields, also a great number of Horses, particularly coach-horses, drawing stage-coaches. The thermometer as high as 92.”

The great, empty-looking parish church, an example of the depths of commonplace to which the Perpendicular style can descend, has nothing of interest, partly, no doubt, because Sir Gilbert Scott was had in during 1863-4 to “restore” it, at a cost of £9,000, and partly because it is designed in a monotonous repetition of window for window, and moulding for moulding, from end to end. It is, in short, tedious and tiresome to a degree, and contains a very nasty effigy of “Joana Wallis,” dated 1675.

A depressing influence seems to pervade the district between Loughborough and the Trent. The scenery is of no striking quality and the villages seem to have experienced their best days. Hathern is an uninteresting village of framework knitters, and Kegworth—in Domesday Book “Cogesworde”—that comes next after it, makes hosiery, brews beer, manufactures plaster, and carries on a variety of useful industries, but looks as grim as a person responsible for thousands who has but a penny in his pocket. It is a gaunt

townlet, with large and equally gaunt church of the Decorated period, standing in a commanding position in the centre of the unlovely place. Both alike look ragged and poverty-stricken, and although a large sum has been spent on restoring the building, it still looks as though no care had been taken of it for centuries. A bell still rings curfew at 8 p.m. in the winter months. The Vestry was formerly the residence of a “*domus inclusus*,” or hermit.

Tom Moore, that merry Irishman, found it possible to write poetry at Kegworth, but he performed some marvellous things. Tommy dearly loved a lord, and was here in 1811 for the express purpose of being near his friend, Lord Moira, whose park at Donington is near by. When my lord went to India, the poet removed to Mayfield, and thence to Sloperton Cottage, near Devizes, to be near Lord Lansdowne.

Three miles away to the right of the road and across the Soar, into Nottinghamshire, is Gotham, a place so famed in legend that the impulse to visit it is irresistible. The way lies by Kingston-on-Soar, where there is a beautiful little church with wonderfully elaborate monument to the Babington family, bearing their punning rebus of the “Babe in Tun.”

The “Wise Men of Gotham” is an ironical saying, for the Gothamites are proverbial for stupidity; but, like the fatuous behaviour of the Wiltshire “moonrakers” of Bishop’s Cannings, the childish simplicity of the original Gotham wise-

acres was merely assumed. Their great exploit was to plant a hedge round a cuckoo perched on a bush, in order to keep him in; and on a hill one mile distant may to this day be found the "Cuckoo Bush," pointed out as the scene of their efforts. It is an ivy-grown circular bank in a plantation enclosing a group of trees.

But for the most circumstantial account of the doings of these rude forefathers of the hamlet, we must have recourse to the legend preserved by Thoroton, in the pages of his history of Nottinghamshire.

It seems, then, that King John, passing through Gotham towards Nottingham, and intending to go through the meadows, was prevented by the villagers, who imagined that the ground once travelled by a king would for ever become a public road. The King, furious at their proceedings—and the tantrums of a Norman sovereign were something fearful—sent some of his retinue to learn the reason of this strange, not to say highly temerarious, conduct; but during the interval the men of Gotham had been able to reflect, and had come to the conclusion that something terrible in the way of punishment awaited them, unless they could prove themselves exceptional fools.

Accordingly, when the messengers arrived, they found the villagers engaged in all manner of fantastic employments. Some were endeavouring to drown an eel; others were occupied in dragging carts on to the roof of a barn, to shade

the wood from the sun ; yet others were tumbling their cheeses downhill, to find their way to Nottingham market ; and some were busily engaged in hedging in a cuckoo which had perched itself upon an old bush. In short, they were all busy in some foolish way or another ; and their folly was duly reported to the King ; who, however, shrewdly remarked that “ we ween there be more fools pass through Gotham than remain in it.”

The folly of the Gothamites, according to this version, was more apparent than real ; but it is the name for folly, rather than that for cunning, which has survived. So early as 1568 appeared the book entitled “The Merry Tales of the Mad-men of Gottam,” and other ancient allusions are plentiful ; among them that to “Gotham College,” an imaginary institution for the training of simpletons. A rhyme, of unknown antiquity, celebrates another exploit of the villagers, in a delicately allusive way :

Three Wise Men of Gotham
Went to sea in a bowl :
If the bowl had been stronger,
My tale had been longer.

The tragedy of the voyage we can vividly picture for ourselves.

There is, however, a rival Gotham, disputing these doubtful honours. It is a place called Gotham Marsh, situated in the neighbourhood of Pevensey, and the identical tales are told of it ; but if any place may be said to be the real

original, the Nottinghamshire village is the one, although it must not be forgotten that many places are credited with similar stupidity. Of the village of Towednack, in Cornwall, in the neighbourhood of St. Ives, the identical cuckoo story is told ; the people of Coggeshall, in Essex, are said to have chained up a wheelbarrow, after it was bitten by a mad dog, for fear it should develop



GOTHAM.

hydrophobia ; and in the ancient world Bœotia and Phrygia were notoriously considered the home of the dunderheaded. We are familiar, too, with the taunt in the Scriptures, “Can any good come out of Nazareth ?”

This is all very highly uncomplimentary and interesting, and Gotham seems eminently a place to be visited ; but travellers meet with strange disappointments. Gotham is a furiously ugly

village of extraordinarily wide and empty roads, and smelling violently of pigs; gypsum mines and soap-works still further render it undesirable. A commonplace inn, the “Cuckoo Bush,” displays a double-sided pictorial sign, very faded, exhibiting on one side the cuckoo and on the other a group of the wiseacres aforesaid, attempting to build him in.

It is indeed, by selecting the fine church, possible to make an illustration of Gotham that shall not be commonplace; and the interior, being in part Transitional Norman, is even finer than the exterior. A singular uncouth carving on the chancel arch, popularly supposed to represent “Toothache,” was probably intended to typify the Divine “gift of speech.”

Resuming the road at Kegworth, the fag-end of Leicestershire is soon ended. Lockington, on the left hand, with a very dilapidated church, being the last village in this angle of the shire, where it joins Notts and Derbyshire, was once considered a remote and out-of-the-way place: hence the old rustic saying, “Put up your pipes and go to Lockington Wake”: *i.e.* “Be quiet and go away with you.”

XXV

AND thus we come to the Trent, but before crossing at Cavendish Bridge and into Derby, we will leave the modern high road, and, striking off to the left, through Castle Donington, come,

in something like six miles, to Stanton-by-Bridge and the long causeway that leads up to the famous bridge of Swarkestone. The present line of road between Derby and London, by way of Loughborough, did not come into great use until 1771, when Cavendish Bridge was built. Until that time, the broad and swift Trent, at the best of times not easily crossed, and always peculiarly subject to flooding, was without a bridge anywhere else than at Swarkestone in all those twenty-four miles or so between Nottingham and Burton, and much of the traffic of horsemen, pedestrians and pack-horses, instead of crossing the Trent here, at Wilne Ferry, went southward of Derby by Osmaston, Chellaston, and across the river at Swarkestone, and thence past Stanton-by-Bridge and King's Newton, coming into a choice of roads for London at Ravenstone, whence one went, at discretion, either by Hinckley and Towcester, or else by Groby and so into Leicester.

The Trent was thus, in those ancient days when bridges were few, a barrier of high strategical importance, and whoso held those infrequent bridges commanded the military situation in the midlands : hence the high importance, from an early period, of the castle, town, and bridge of Nottingham.

Between Stanton and Swarkestone, on either side of the Trent, the land stretches out perfectly flat for nearly a mile, and is at this day a fertile expanse of water-meadows in summer. In winter, or in wet seasons, it becomes a vast inland sea,

not, even now, altogether without its dangers, but anciently extremely hazardous.

To build a causeway from the comparatively high ground of Stanton on one side, and Swarkestone on the other, with little bridges spanning the intermediate rills, and a large bridge crossing the Trent itself, became early the good work of



THE CAUSEWAY, SWARKESTONE BRIDGE.

some pious founder, whose identity has, in the way usual with such things, become involved in legends. The chief legend of Swarkestone Bridge tells us that it was built by two maiden sisters, whose lovers were drowned in the passage, before ever a bridge or causeway existed. They expended all their fortune upon, and devoted their lives to, the work, and built a chapel on the bridge itself, wherein wayfarers might give thanks for their

safety, and pray for the souls of those who had been drowned, and those of the pious benefactors. Another version says that the two ladies were daughters of the Countess of Bellomont, and that they expended all their fortune on the work, and were reduced to spinning for a livelihood.

But if we seek the real origin of this early work, thought to have been originally undertaken in the twelfth century, we must look to the neighbouring Priory of Repton, which built it and kept it in repair, just as many other religious houses undertook similar works of practical Christianity on behalf of wayfarers, all over the country ; making roads, bridging rivers, and providing hostels for all and sundry whose evil fate compelled them to travel in those days when the best place in the world was a man's own fireside.

In the chapel they placed on the bridge a brother of the Priory officiated, at the same time receiving offerings from grateful travellers for maintenance and repairs of the structure. And so the combined chapel and toll-house remained, until all religious institutions suffered a thorough change, under Henry the Eighth. We know what then became of it, for in the report of the Church Goods Commissioners in 1552 it is stated : "We have a chapell edified and buylded upon Trent in ye mydest of the greate streme annexed to Swerston bregge, the whiche had certayne stufte belongyng to it ; ii desks to knell in, a table of wode, and certayne barres of yron and glasse in the wyndos, which Mr. Edward Beamont, of Arkeston, hath

taken away to his owne use, and we saye that if the chappell dekeye, the bridge wyll not stande."

The chapel was, however, allowed to "dekeye," and yet the bridge stood, having been rebuilt so late as 1796. It says much for the excellence of the monks' work that their bridge remained until 1795, when, not floods merely, but floods aided by a heavy lot of timber from a yard upstream, came and overthrew it.

The bridge has been the scene of some military exploits. Here the redoubtable Sir John Gell of Hopton, commanding the Parliamentary forces, routed a force of Cavaliers on January 5th, 1643; and held the approaches during all that troubled time. In 1745, too, when Prince Charles and his Highlanders came so near to overthrowing the House of Hanover, and regaining the crown of England for the feckless Stuarts, he made, as any invader from the north was bound to do, for this essential position.

The story of "the Forty-five" is closely involved with the course of the Manchester and Glasgow Road, from this point onwards, and therefore requires some brief historical summary.

In 1745, Prince Charles, the "Young Pretender," son of James, the "Old Pretender," who in 1715 had made an ineffectual attempt to secure the crown his father, James the Second, had lost, determined on a bold throw for fortune. Setting out from France, July 2nd, on the *Doutelle*, a little brig of 18 guns, engaged in privateering against English shipping, he landed eventually at

Erisca, in the Hebrides. He had not voyaged without adventure. Accompanying the *Doutelle* was a French warship, the *Elizabeth*, which carried 68 guns and 700 men.

The precise connection of the French government with this attempt of Prince Charles is obscure; but it would appear to have been an elastic arrangement, by which the French could disclaim any hand in the rising, if it proved a failure, while sympathetic enough to secretly aid, and to be prepared for further help if the prospects of the enterprise were sufficiently hopeful. Off the Lizard, the two ships were challenged by an English man-o'-war, the *Lion*, which engaged the *Elizabeth*, with the result that both were disabled and compelled to put back to their respective ports; while the brig bearing the Prince, his few followers, his supplies of money and arms, made away to Scotland.

Prince Charlie, the darling of many a romantic tale and legend, the hero of numberless pathetic Scots ballads, was at this time twenty-five years of age: tall above the average, comely and courteous: every inch a Prince, so his admirers declared. The Highland chieftains who had been so lavish of promises when he was away, across the water, were not at first so ready with their help when he appeared among them. A good deal of time was wasted, and he raised his white standard with the red cross at Glenfinnan only on August 19th. Thereafter, the clans poured in to his aid; but it was not until September 16th

that he appeared before Edinburgh and summoned the city to surrender. Edinburgh, let it be acknowledged, placed no obstacles in his way, for it submitted very tamely, and Charles, in all the glory of a costume which seems to the present generation, that goes clad in so sombre a fashion, to have been extravagantly theatrical, had the satisfaction of proclaiming his father at the High Cross, as King James the Eighth of Scotland, and Third of England.

Let us see what figure of romance he presented to the loyal eyes of the clansmen, and the melting glances of the ladies. He stood straight as a lance, and wore breeches of red velvet, military boots, and a short tartan coat crossed with a blue silk sash, edged with gold. On his head was a blue velvet bonnet, bound with gold lace, and with a white cockade, the badge of his party. On his breast depended the star of the order of St. Andrew, and at his side swung a basket-hilted broadsword. The hair of this very picture of a Prince of romance was of an auburn tint, but it was generally concealed from view by a white wig. Altogether, this was a display that may be thought more suitable for ceremonial occasions than for the serious business of campaigning.

To modern censorious minds the picture formed by this gay figure suffers in the letters he wrote. They were written, let it be said, in the loftiest sentiments, but the spelling of them was abominable. When every one—among those who were sufficiently accomplished to write at all—spelled

according to personal predilection, this mattered little or nothing; but in these days, when every Board School boy can at least spell simple words, it seems shocking, and tarnishes romance with a smear of vulgarity, to read Prince Charlie's references to "muney" and "munishuns." When he draws his "sord," we laugh, instead of being thrilled, and when he writes of his father



SWARKESTONE BRIDGE.

as "gems," we with difficulty understand that he means "James."

This is no place to follow his advance step by step. He gained a complete victory at Prestonpans on September 21st and, the way then cleared, he should have pressed forward. But a lack of sufficient recruits, and, much more certainly, the wish to pose and dazzle Edinburgh, as the victor in this first conflict, led the Prince to delay. Had he made a dash into England on the morrow

of Prestonpans, his cousin, King George, would in all likelihood have been overthrown. But he wasted precious time, and only left Edinburgh on October 31st, for the advance upon England. He was at Carlisle on November 9th. The opposition there was feeble, and he took the city and passed on. Meanwhile, large forces were moving up from the south to meet him and his Highlanders. Marshal Wade was in Staffordshire with an army, and the Duke of Cumberland was advancing with another. King George in person was proposing to leave London with a third. Many of these troops had been landed from the scene of war with the French in Flanders, in the interval of inaction after Prestonpans.

Prince Charles decided to give battle to Wade in Staffordshire, and advanced through Lancaster and Manchester, to Stockport. News then arrived of the presence of the Duke of Cumberland with his army divided between Lichfield, Coventry, Stafford, and Newcastle-under-Lyme, and the ingenious ruse was contrived of detaching a small column of Highlanders to Congleton, while the main body of the Prince's force slipped quietly by the English army, on the road to Derby. It was a master-stroke of manœuvring and was entirely successful. The Duke of Cumberland, thus cleverly deceived, hurried up his forces on the evening of December 2nd, going north, while the invaders pushed south, and were installed at Derby on the 4th, where they were rejoined by the detached column.

At this juncture the third English army was just setting out from London and had reached Finchley Common. London was thoroughly alarmed : shops were closed, the banks experienced an uneasy time, and more than one of King George's ministers anxiously debated the problem of whether it were safest to declare for the Stuarts, or to remain loyal to the House of Hanover. King George himself, according to popular rumour, had made every preparation for leaving the country in haste, if it were found necessary. Above all, the French were expected to attempt a landing. All these terrors and doubts resulted in a panic on a day long after remembered as "Black Friday."

Prince Charles came very near success. He had five thousand men at Derby, and although his ragged Highlanders were looked upon with contempt by the English people, and although his cause by no means met with the popular support he had anticipated, the people, if indeed they did not help him, at any rate did not very actively oppose. Scottish sentiment had, in a manner truly remarkable, survived the fact that the Prince was a Roman Catholic, and that he was quite ignorant, at the time of his landing, of Scottish costume and manners ; but the English people looked with disfavour upon one who was almost as much a foreigner as George the Second himself. They loved neither the Hanoverians nor the Stuarts, and were heartily tired of both their houses, whose ambitions were for ever hindering honest men in their business and their pleasures.

Had Prince Charles made haste to advance beyond Derby, he would have been running grave risks, but, with two hostile forces already near him, the position could scarce have been more dangerous ; while it was busily rumoured that either the courage or the loyalty, or perhaps both, of the King's army on Finchley Common were in doubt ; and that on the appearance of the invaders they would promptly lay down their arms. Prince Charles, to do him justice, was eager to advance. To retreat, even for a while, would be, he clearly saw, to strike dismay into his supporters, and to weaken his cause. Already his outposts were six miles south of Derby, holding the approaches to Swarkestone Bridge. He was for risking everything. "Rather than go back," he said, "I would wish to be twenty feet underground." But the faint-hearts were numerous around him. Not among the clansmen, but amid the leaders did prudence—to call it no worse name—show itself; and prudence prevailed. After heated councils of war, the outposts were withdrawn, and on December 5th the retreat from Derby began.

The historian who is also a sentimentalist, and looks upon history as a romance, at this point feels keenly disappointed. He cares little for Stuart or Hanoverian, but he feels defrauded of the stirring chapters that would have been added to English history, had Prince Charles pressed on and reached London. Three, at least, of the Georges were so deadly dull, alike in their vices and their less frequent virtues, that a Stuart, even

though he developed afterwards all the defects of his race, would have been welcome. But it was not to be, and, after marching into the very middle of England, the invaders marched all the weary way back again ; and met disaster miserably in the midst of Scotland. They could have fared



"THE BALCONY," SWARKESTONE.

no worse, and would have ended more gloriously, in the advance.

Some admiration must needs be felt for the villagers near Swarkestone. The Derby militia and amateur soldiers made a strategic movement to the rear on the advance of the Highlanders, but the men of Weston presented an embattled front. In the records of that village we learn

the villagers held a council and furbished up their arms for resistance. They sent forth one John Pritchard, as scout, to Derby, to see if the rebels were coming, and despatched on his heels Francis Henshaw and William Dawson, made valiant with three quarts of ale each. William Rose, blacksmith, was paid one shilling "for mending ye towne musquet," and a further sum of one shilling-and-sixpence was expended upon ammunition for this weapon. Doubtless, the men of Weston would have given a good account of themselves, and it is to be remarked that it was the day after these warlike preparations that Prince Charles began his retreat! Weston rejoiced, and appointed a day of thanksgiving, the village constable contributed half-a-crown thank-offering, and the community got as drunk as funds permitted.

Thus, for many reasons, we look upon Swarkestone Bridge with interest. Causeway and bridge combined extend for three-quarters of a mile; the Trent itself spanned in five arches of 414 feet in all. The causeway, with its many Gothic-arched openings, is obviously very old, and is not improved in appearance by the recent repairs done in blue brick. On the Swarkestone side stands the fine substantial old coaching inn, the "Crewe and Harpur's Arms," with the many-quartered shield of arms of the family of Harpur-Crewe, of Calke, near by, prominent over the door, surmounting the motto, *Degenerante genus opprobrium*—"Lineage becomes a disgrace to him who degenerates from it."

The Harpurs, who settled at Swarkestone in the fifteenth century, came originally from Warwickshire, and flourished here exceedingly, as their monuments in the church, hard by, prove. One, Sir Richard Harpur, 1577, lies in effigy, robed as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and his son, Sir John Harpur, near by. Their old mansion is in ruins close by the church, but in a meadow, still called the “Balcony Field,” remains a curious Jacobean pavilion that would appear to have been the spot whence the ladies of the family and their guests safely watched the sports : the bull- and bear-baiting and other vanished pastimes of a brutal era.

XXVI

RETURNING to Cavendish Bridge, and crossing it, we enter Derbyshire, whose people have long been unjustly made the subject of the old folk-rhyme :

Derbyshire born,
Derbyshire bred,
Strong i' th' arm,
An' thick i' th' 'ead.

The tolls levied at Cavendish Bridge long remained at an almost prohibitive figure. The crossing of the Trent, before the bridge was completed in 1771 at a cost of £3,333, was by means of a ferry-barge, large enough to take vehicles, and the fare for a post-chaise was half-a-crown, which remained the charge for the bridge, as Bray in his tour of 1776 notes.

Although the bridge was long since freed, the toll-house stands, and on it may still be seen the old notice-board which it seems to have been nobody's business, in particular, to remove. I am



CAVENDISH BRIDGE.

grateful for the fact, for it enables the following particulars to be gleaned :

Tolls taken at this BRIDGE by Virtue of an Act of Parliament being the same that were taken at the Ferry, viz. :—

	s.	d.
Coaches, Chariots, Landaus, etc., with 4 wheels, each	2 6
Chaise, Chair, etc. ; with 2 wheels	1 0
Waggon, Wain, etc. ; with 4 wheels	1 6
Horse, Mule, or Afs, not drawing	0 1

And so forth, through the various classes of traffic, ending with :

Foot passengers	d.
Soldiers (favour'd)	$\frac{1}{2}$

The Trent, broad and strong, borders the road for the half-mile between the bridge and the village of Shardlow, where the Trent and Mersey Canal runs across the way, and the "Holden Arms," a church built in the unsatisfactory Gothic of 1838, the "Navigation," the "Dog and Duck," and the "Old Crown" inns are huddled; together with a fine old red-brick mansion dated 1686, and bearing the initials R.B.L.

It is but seven miles onward to Derby, and the town has grown so greatly, and is still growing with such giant strides, that it has sent out, as it were, along the road, all manner of subtle indications of its advance; together with some not so subtle, in the shape of dusty roads and horrible houses. For the worst side of Derby is obtruded upon the London road. You do not come into all this kind of thing at once. It is a sort of gradual declension. First you notice an uncomfortable something indefinable, then the hedges begin to be worn and ragged, and at last disappear altogether. Then you pass a bend in the road—and there—ah! me—is the inevitable electric tramway, with the conductor and driver of the waiting car, in the usual uniform modelled on that of a ship's petty officer.

But there are two or three things on the way that demand notice. Nowhere can there be another neighbourhood so prodigal in "astons" as this. Here, on the road itself, is Alvaston; to the right is Elvaston, and scattered here, there, and everywhere are Ambaston, Admaston, Chellaston,

Breaston, and Osmaston ; with one village simply “Aston” unadorned.

The very similar names of Alvaston and Elvaston are productive of infinite trouble to the Post Office and others ; but the places are very different from one another. Alvaston is a place of modern suburban development ; but Elvaston, lying a mile off to the right of the road, and approached only by difficult byways, is very rural.



THE TRENT, AND CAVENDISH BRIDGE, FROM SHARDLOW.

Hidden away there, stands Elvaston Castle, seat of the Earl of Harrington, that unconventional peer who conducts (or until lately did conduct) a fruit-shop at the corner of Craig’s Court, Charing Cross.

I love the House of Lords and the hereditary principle. Vulgar Radicals declare the Peers a collection of epileptic degenerates, company-promoters, guinea-pigs, touts for wine-merchants, and grinders of the faces of the poor, and point out that many of its members have been in gaol,

and others ought to be ; and that some (none quite recently) have been hanged, and others have been in inebriate asylums, and will be again ; but I should be sorry to see them abolished. They afford so interesting a spectacle, are so superb an anachronism, and provide such engrossing scandals for readers of the newspapers that the public—and the newspaper proprietors—will not easily be persuaded to part with them at the suggestion of the Gideons of the Radical party. We love the romance of the House of Lords ; and for this reason we dislike to see its constituent members selling fruit, or, like Lord Londonderry, Lord Dudley, or Lord Durham, selling coals. Lord Tennyson sold milk, and that revolted many : an ennobled poet dealing in dairy produce is an anachronism, and the owner of an historic title entering into business and exercising all the arts of the commercial man while clinging to the privileges of his station is a thing that no one can look upon without sorrow.

Elvaston Castle is an odd place. Exploring in these byways, the wayfarer comes suddenly to it, as into a courtyard, where the church, with its tall pinnacled tower, stands to one side and the mansion on the other, with the courtyard itself littered like the approach to a farm. Tall piers stand on either side, crested with snarling demi-lions holding flaming grenades.

For centuries the estate has been in the Stanhope family, created Earls of Harrington in 1742, and is placed amid very beautiful gardens, greatly

improved about the middle of last century by Charles, fourth Earl, who married Maria Foote, the actress, and wrought many wonderful things here; forming that lake which the great Duke of Wellington declared to be the only natural artificial sheet of water he had ever seen. The place looks strangely romantic and wild.

An astonishing story is told of an ancestress of the Earl of Harrington. A Stanhope of olden times died young, and his widow, like those other brilliant Royalist dames at Corfe Castle and Brampton Bryan, held Elvaston during a siege by the Parliamentary forces in 1643, commanded by Sir John Gell. In the end, the besiegers wore out the little defending band at Elvaston, and Sir John Gell, after the manner of the conquering heroes of that time, did what havoc he could about the place. He made a woeful wreck of the beautiful garden, demolished a magnificent monument Lady Stanhope had erected to the memory of her husband, and at last—insisted upon her marrying him! She naturally refused so preposterous an idea—and then quite as naturally agreed to wed this terrific wooer, who literally had stormed his way to her heart. He was very masculine: there can be no doubt whatever of his gender; and if it be true that, above all things, a woman loves a manly man, she had, in Sir John Gell, an ideal mate, for, as the poet says:

'Tis not so much 'the lover who woos,
As the lover's *way* of wooing;

and what a way this Roundhead knight had with him!

But Derby town is advancing upon Elvaston, and will shortly be upon it, and the place is in consequence not being maintained in its old style. Some day, possibly, the Midland Railway may come and cut it up. Already it has abolished



ELVASTON CASTLE.

Osmaston Hall, and made the rest of the way into Derby a grimy, smoke-laden purlieu.

XXVII

DERBY, or, more strictly, Little Chester, hard by, was the Roman *Derventio*, a name it derived from the river Derwent, in the days of the ancient Britons: the *Dier gwent*, or clear water. When the Saxons came and settled near the site of

Derventio, they styled the place “Northweorthing,” and the Danes, who in turn drove out the Saxons, named it “Deoraby,” whence the transition to the modern “Derby” is easy. The modern arms of Derby display a buck *couchant* in a park, an allusion to the supposed origin of the Danish place-name, thought to derive from the Teutonic name, *thier*, for wild beasts, which term would no doubt include deer. But if this be the correct derivation, it is an extraordinary coincidence that the first syllable of the Roman place-name and that of the Danish should be identical.

The untravelled are easily misled as to the appearance of Derby town. If you were to believe the average guide-book, you would never visit the place, and would rank it with Swindon or Wolverton, or the like. It is true that the chief offices and the works of the Midland Railway are centred here, and that modern Derby is the creation of these circumstances; but, lapped round and enfolded though it is by machine-shops and the mean streets of sheer industrialism, ancient Derby is not altogether to be spoken of in the past tense.

The historical incidents connected with Derby are not many, and they are nearly all associated with the unhappy House of Stuart, whose members exhibited so strange an inability to rule themselves that it remains an odd problem how so ill-balanced a family ever raised itself to kingly rank.

Derby entertained Charles the First in 1635

and made him and his followers welcome to the town. They did it in coin and in kind ; with a purse stuffed full of sovereigns, and with gifts of an ox, a calf, and six sheep. In 1642, when the Civil War was already in progress, the King was back again, “borrowing” £300. It has ever been an ill investment, this lending to kings, and Derby never again saw the colour of its money. I, for one, am not surprised that Derby afterwards declared for the Parliament.

The burgesses were still incensed against the Stuarts when Prince Charlie came in 1745, at the head of his wild Highlanders, in his futile effort to upset George the Second and regain the throne of his ancestors ; and, for all the brave promises made, of five shillings down, and five pounds apiece when they reached London, he obtained only three recruits in the whole town. We have already, at Swarkestone Bridge, heard at length of this ill-fated rising, but Derby affords some amusing incidents. The Duke of Devonshire had raised a regiment of one hundred and fifty men, to oppose the advance of the Highlanders, and the squires and magistrates of the county, and the corporation of Derby, had raised a force of six hundred more. Derby apparently presented an armoured front to the foe, but it was woefully deceptive. At ten o’clock on the night of December 3rd, when scouts brought tidings of the enemy’s advance, the drums sounded to the muster and the warriors fell in. The order was given to march, and they marched accordingly :

out of the back door when the rebels were coming in at the front. In short, they and the Duke who led them emulated the example of the “runaway musketeers,” or, like a billiard-player, uncertain of the game, played for safety. Whether it were policy, seeing that the invaders were advancing with so bold a front, and looked like being successful, or whether it were cowardice, seems to have been a debated point. But it was certainly not military genius. They were led towards Nottingham, and ravaged the farmhouses for food and drink as they went, making war on the poultry, and forgetting to pay.

Meanwhile, horrid reports reached them from Derby. The Pretender had arrived and had extorted £3,000 from the town. But what sent shivers of apprehension down their spinal columns was the news that the enemy had in great numbers attended service and partaken of the Sacrament, and had then resorted to the cutlers to have their swords sharpened. This meant business. We may imagine the sigh of relief with which these warriors heard of the wholly unexpected retreat of the Highlanders, and that there was not, after all, to be a Battle of Derby.

Industry, and not war, makes up the history of the town, together with the usual amusement of religious persecution that colours the old annals of all places. It was at Derby in 1650 that the Society of Friends first came by the name of “Quakers,” when George Fox was brought as a sectary before Mr. Justice Bennet. “He was,”

says Fox, "the first who called us quakers, because I bid them tremble at the word of the Lord."

But soon there were other things to do. In 1717 the art of spinning silk was introduced to England by John Lombe, who built the first mill here, and set up machinery whose secrets he had learned in Italy, until that time the great silk-spinning country. The romantic story is told of how, determined to discover the closely guarded processes of manufacture, he visited Italy and in disguise worked at a silk-mill; returning to England with the information he had acquired, and with a number of workmen he had succeeded in bribing. His death shortly afterwards was ascribed to his having been poisoned by an Italian woman sent over for the purpose by the manufacturers whose secrets he had surprised.

Calico afterwards became, in addition to silk, an article of Derby manufacture, but in the popular mind the name of the town is usually associated with the production of china, the fame of the beautiful "Crown Derby" porcelain being more widespread than that of silk or calico. The Royal Crown Derby works, established about 1750, lasted very nearly a hundred years, being closed in 1848.

Derby was sufficiently important to be able to support a coach to and from London, so early as 1735, when a conveyance set out every Thursday from the "George." This was continued in 1790 to Manchester, and then went daily; leaving

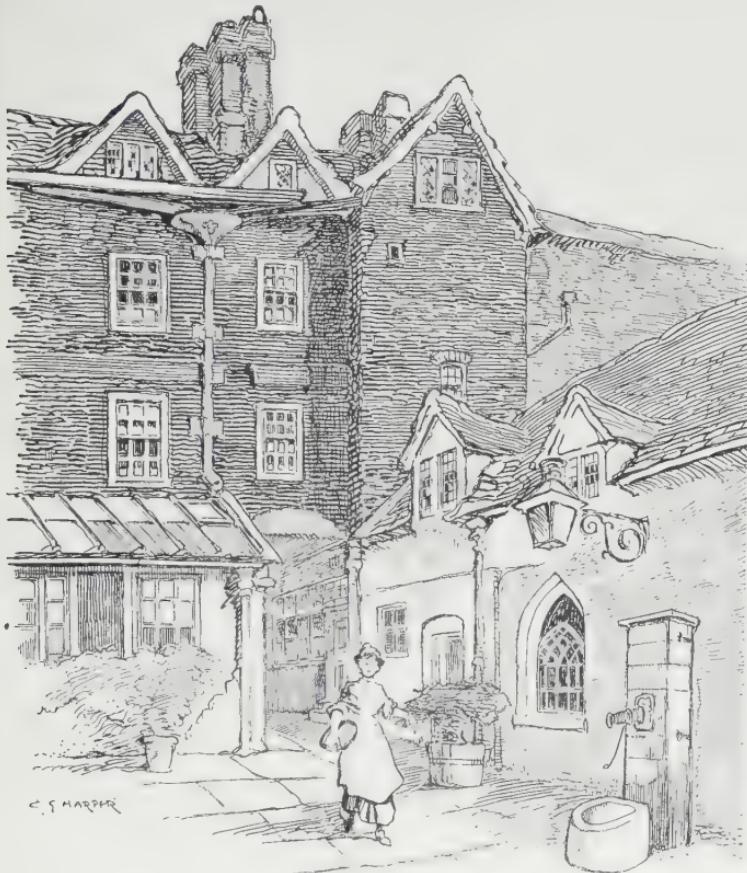
Derby at 3 p.m. and arriving in London at 10 o'clock the following morning. From the "Bell" went another coach, certainly as early as 1778, when, on March 15th, it was announced that "the Derby Fly, in one day to London for the summer season, will set out from the Bell Inn on Sunday next, and will continue to set out every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings at six o'clock, each passenger to pay £1 8s. and to be allowed 14 lb. weight of luggage. Performed by Hilliard, Henson, Foster & Co."

The early importance of the Derby inns as starting and arrival points for the coaches was somewhat obscured at a later date, when coaching had grown enormously, leading to the establishment of special coach-offices in the town, of which Stenson's General Coach Office, in Sadler Gate, was the chief. An early notice of the "Bell" is found in 1698, when it was kept by one G. Meynell. In 1702 a "Widow Ward" was landlady. In 1761 the house and all its eatables and drinkables were made free to all-comers by Sir Henry Harpur during his Parliamentary candidature. A few years later, the house was rebuilt by a retired West India merchant, John Campion, whose initials, and the date 1774, elaborately done in leadwork, are to be seen to this day on an old pump, still in working order in the courtyard. The house remained in the Campion family until about 1865.

The old claret-coloured brick front of the "Bell" looks down upon Sadler Gate, very much

as of old, and its courtyard still echoes with the sound of prosperous business.

The curtain of romantic history was rung down at Derby on a most dramatic situation, so



COURTYARD OF THE "BELL" INN.

late as 1817, in the executions here for High Treason.

The "high treason" for which Jeremiah Brandreth and his associates were then executed was a singular incident to have occurred so late

as the nineteenth century. It was nothing less than an attempted rising against the Government; an armed effort at subverting the existing order of things that seemed more in keeping with the insurrections of earlier ages. It certainly never became a formidable movement, and was really an affair fomented by one Oliver, an agent of the Sidmouth-Castlereagh administration, which was uneasy at the generally disturbed state of the country, and fearful that the strong language indulged in by the Radical agitators among the working class and the swiftly increasing numbers of factory-workers might, if unchecked, lead to very serious movements. In this frame of mind, the weak and criminal Ministers appear to have considered that their best course was to employ spies who should worm their way into the confidence of the discontented classes, and actually provoke them into acts of armed rebellion that would give the Government an opportunity of repressing them violently.

The headquarters of Oliver, the spy, were at the turbulent and disaffected town of Nottingham, whence he travelled here and there into the surrounding districts, posing as a leader of London malcontents, and making inflammatory speeches. At the "Blackmoor's Head" and the "Three Salmons" in Nottingham, he addressed the sullen working-men, and spoke of a "provisional Government" being formed, and of 70,000 men in London, ready to rise. Monday, June 9th, 1817, was fixed by him and his dupes in Derbyshire

for a march upon Nottingham, where he declared they would be met by numerous bands of insurgents from the south, and together would seize the Castle. The soldiers, he declared, were with them, to a man.

Chief among the ardent spirits ready to fall into the snare set by Oliver was Jeremiah Brandreth, a young man of about twenty-five years of age, of a dark, bold, and determined character; the very picture, in appearance and in fiery energy, of a popular leader. His parentage and place of birth are uncertain. Under the leadership of Brandreth, called by his followers "the Nottingham Captain," and afterwards described as "otherwise John Coke," a large number of men (according to one account five hundred) assembled, in the words of the subsequent indictment, "with force and arms," "a great multitude of false traitors," in the parish of South Wingfield. Among them were agricultural labourers, weavers, and quarrymen of Wingfield, Pentridge, and neighbouring parishes, styling themselves "the Regenerators." Between June 9th and 15th they hovered between these villages, armed with hedgestakes and rude pikes, calling at houses and farmsteads to seize any firearms that could be found, and endeavouring to enlist men. Brandreth became possessed of a pair of pistols, which he struck in a belt formed of an apron twisted round his waist. With one of these pistols he shot dead a farm servant named Robert Walters, during an altercation at Pentridge. Meanwhile, hearing

no tidings of the supposed insurgents who were to meet them, the undisciplined band grew nervous and disheartened, and their numbers were rapidly thinned by desertions. At length, when they entered the county of Nottingham at Eastwood, there were but forty left. In the interval, the magistrates and the police, probably informed by Oliver, discovered that something of an unusual nature was afoot, and the 95th Regiment of Foot, the Yeomanry, and the 15th Hussars, all ready to hand, were warned to hold themselves prepared for eventualities. By the 15th of June these tremendous preparations were seen to be too ridiculously imposing for the purpose of dealing with a mere dwindling mob; and a mere party of eighteen Hussars was despatched to capture them. Brandreth and his men, standing despondent upon a hill at Eastwood, saw them cantering along, and thought them to be some of the long-expected revolutionaries. They were soon undeceived, and then fled in panic, throwing away their weapons, such as they were. The Hussars captured some thirty of them, between Kimberley and Longley Mill, and lodged them in Nottingham Gaol. Brandreth himself escaped, and lay in hiding for awhile, but was betrayed by "a friend," for sake of the £50 reward offered.

The chief figures in this affair were, to the number of twenty-three, arraigned before a special Assize held at Derby on October 15th, with the result that Brandreth, William Turner, and Isaac Ludlam, senior, were condemned to be hanged,

STAGE-COACH TRAVELLING, 1828 (DERBY AND SHEFFIELD).

[After J. Pollard.



drawn, and quartered. Eleven others were “pardoned,” as the quaint phrase ran, “upon condition of being transported for life”; three were similarly “pardoned” by being awarded fourteen years’ transportation; while one had two years’, two a term of one year, and three a mere six months’.

The three principal offenders were executed at Nuns Green, on November 7th, and were hanged, having merely their heads cut off afterwards; the Prince Regent “graciously remitting the rest of their sentence.” How kind!

The unfortunate men took affecting leave of one another, anticipating being presently in heaven. The hangman, duly masked—he was said to be one of the Denby colliers—then performed his office, and afterwards cut off the heads: making so ill a job over Brandreth that his assistant was fain to complete the work with knives. Thereupon, the executioner, in the gory old formula, held up the head before the huge assembled crowd, and, turning right and left, exclaimed, “Behold the head of the traitor, Jeremiah Brandreth!”

The bodies of the three men were unceremoniously flung into a pit dug in the churchyard of St. Werburgh, in Friar Gate. A sportive barber, Pegg by name, then took to masquerading in the churchyard as a ghost, robed in a sheet, and, scared the inhabitants for some time, until a bold spirit, throwing a stone at him, hit him with such violence in the eye that he went half blind for the rest of his life.

XXVIII

THERE are picturesque corners in this town of Derby, so contemned by most writers, sufficient to make the fortune, in the pictorial way, of many another town. Derby, to an artist, at any rate, is a likeable place, and such an one is in sympathy with Boswell, who wrote in 1777 :

“ I felt a pleasure in walking about Derby. There is an immediate sensation of novelty, and one speculates on the way in which life is passed in it.”

Ancient and modern rudely jostle here, and the streets run on no regular plan. It is a provincial town turned industrial, and still surprised at the change: the any-shaped, no-shaped Market Place, where Boehm’s bronze statue of Michael Thomas Bass stands, remaining still in many ways that of an agricultural market town. But, nevertheless, there has been much pulling down and rebuilding. Among other places, the house where Joseph Wright—the celebrated painter “ Wright of Derby ”—lived, has disappeared, and modern business premises stand on the site. An iron tablet narrates the facts - but why? Such things do but advertise the shame and set a seal upon regret. Alas ! there is no modern Joshua to bid time stand still—and for time to obey.

One of the pleasantest features of the town is the fine park called the Arboretum. Here an interesting relic of the plague that raged in 1665 is placed. This is the so-called “ Headless Cross,”

or Market Stone, removed from Friar Gate, where it served as a means of communication between the stricken townspeople and the countryfolk, bringing in provisions. The market folk, coming with their mouths filled with tobacco, as a disinfectant, placed the meat and vegetables and dairy-produce they had brought upon the ground and witnessed the inhabitants drop their money into the hollow in the stone, filled with vinegar. With these strict precautions it was hoped to escape infection.

All Saints' Church, the most important of the



"YOUNG MEN AND MAIDENS."

several in the town, possesses a tall and very beautiful late Perpendicular tower, built about 1520, according to legend, by the bachelors and spinsters of Derby. Still further, according to legend, it used to be the custom for the bachelors to ring the bells whenever a young woman born in the town was married.

There is, unfortunately, no direct evidence that the tower really was the work of the bachelors and the spinsters. It was probably built from the money given by a wealthy townsman, Robert Liversage, a dyer by trade. A battered inscription, "Young men and maidens," no doubt gave rise to the story. It is now generally believed, except by the humblest people, among whom tales of this

romantic kind live longest, that the inscription was once simply the pious invitation, “Young men and maidens, old men and children, praise ye the Lord.”

A cathedral-like size and breadth of proportion mark this fine tower, the product of the last days of Gothic, rising to a height of 174 feet above the pavement; and the quite humble old houses of the narrow street do but serve to show it to further advantage. It is heavily buttressed at the angles, in a manner sufficient to have made Ruskin storm, had he ever occasion to write of it; for it was his theory that towers should stand starkly four-square, without the aid of buttresses. But what would Gothic architecture be without those essential features! Something new and strange.

The tower being so fine, of what nature was the body of the church? That we cannot know, for it was rebuilt in a classic style by Gibbs, in 1725, and has the appearance of a great pillared hall, very fine of its kind, and extraordinarily spacious. It was quite a new church, not more than twenty years old, when Prince Charlie attended mass here in the '45. There are many fine monuments, chiefly from the older building, among them the elaborate memorial, with coroneted effigy, of the famous Bess of Hardwick, that scheming, matchmaking, imperious woman, four times wedded and widowed, whose passion for building and rebuilding rivalled that for forming matrimonial alliances. She is said to have erected

her own monument, and it is likely enough she did. Her fourth marriage, in her fiftieth year, to the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, embittered the existence of that unhappy man. He was custodian



ALL SAINTS'.

of Mary Queen of Scots. The anxieties of that charge, and a sorry time of it with his wife, shortened his existence. "Two devils," he described the Countess and the imprisoned Queen, and it is likely enough he privately thought Queen

Elizabeth, who was for always worrying him, a third. The quarrels of Earl and Countess were notorious, and the Bishop of Lichfield wrote him what was intended to be a comforting letter on the subject. The tenor of it ran that the case certainly was unfortunate, but, after all, this was the usual lot:

“Some will say in y^r L. behalfe tho’ the Countesse is a sharpe and bitter shrewe, and therefore likely enough to shorten y^r life if shee should kepe yow company: In deede my good Lo. I have heard some say sa; but if shrewdnesse or sharpnesse may be a just cause of sepacion between a man and wif[e], I thinke fewe men in Englande woulde keepe their wives longe; for it is a comon jeste, yet trewe in some sense, that there is but one shrewe in all the worlde, and so ev’y man hathe her, and so ev’y man might be rydd of his wife, that wold be rydd of a shrewe.”

Looking at that proud, arrogant, masterful face, upturned on the monument, you feel sorry, not only for the Earl, but for all who commerced with her.

Among the many of the Cavendish family who lie here are William, second Earl of Devonshire, and his wife and children. The Earl himself died in 1628, and he and his family were commemorated by a fearful monument, the effigies grotesquely misshapen and clad in what seem to be sheets. In 1877 the horrible thing was destroyed, but the statues themselves remain; the Earl himself, a shortened figure with wide mouth and a com-

bined wistful, comical, and grotesque expression that puzzles the modern beholder with reminiscent



ST. ALKMUND'S.

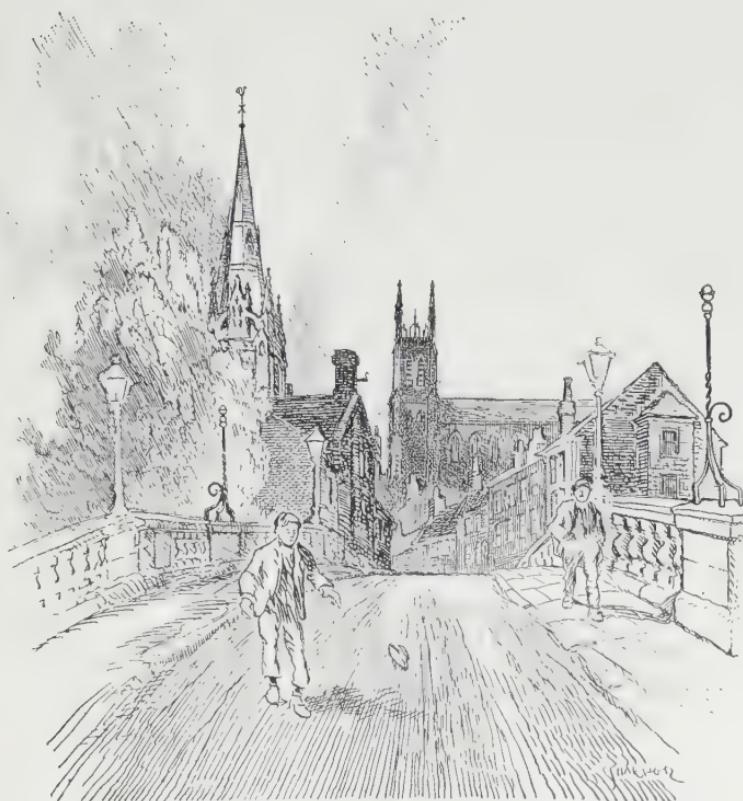
feelings. Where, he asks himself, has he seen the like before? and presently the truth is borne

in upon him, that the thing might well be a reproduction of the late Mr. Dan Leno.

St. Alkmund's spire is a fine foil to the grand tower of All Saints': its grace contrasting with it, as manly strength with feminine beauty. St. Mary's, its next-door neighbour, the Roman Catholic church, is an unfortunate example of Gothic as understood in the middle of the nineteenth century, but it is only necessary to descend a little way, to the bridge crossing the Derwent, and then to look back, for distance to lend a peculiar enchantment to the scene. From the hump-backed bridge you see the bad details of its ill-informed Gothic abolished in a broad, comprehensive kindly haze of smoke issuant from the clustered chimneys of this slummy but picturesque quarter, and it stands up boldly in the view, with St. Alkmund's spire on the left, as though inspired with the finest spirit of the fifteenth century. Equally kindly poplar trees, growing courageously from the Derwent banks, come in to aid the view. We will not look too curiously upon the Derwent itself, for although splashing weirs diversify it, factories of divers sorts line its course, and the water is polluted by them; and this, in short, is not the Derwent as understood by poets.

The bridge itself is small and old, and doubtless will in the not distant future give place to a new. Meanwhile it is weathered in a way that artists love, and there are some quite fine lamp-standards on it, designed in the days before gas. Their

design and execution are unobtrusive: it is indeed quite a small achievement, and doubtless the smith who wrought these standards, a hundred and fifty years or so ago, did the work in the everyday course of his craft and thought no more



ST. MARY'S BRIDGE.

about the matter. But he wrought better than he knew. They were not—those old fellows—self-conscious: they did not know they were artists, and did not do like their present-day descendants, stand admiringly before their work

and call heaven and earth to witness the supreme artistry of it.

XXIX

THE Manchester Road leaves Derby by way of Friar Gate: the town extending rapidly in that direction, too. As I came this way, gangs of navvies were excavating for the new electric tramway, and there I saw, amid the churned mud, a crushed white butterfly; and it seemed to me to typify these developments.

The road onward to Ashbourne is lonely, except for the offshoots sent out in the coaching age by adjacent villages. Thus Mackworth is represented by a wayside fringe of houses, the old village lying below, with its fine church and old castle gate; while Kirk Langley, in like manner, lies to the other side of the road. Quarndon, further off to the right, neighboured by Kedleston Park, is brother to Quorndon in Leicestershire; the only wonder being that the other is written with an “o”: the natural rural disposition being to change an “e” (here the “e” in “quern”) into “a” wherever possible in speech.

There was a time when Quarndon enjoyed a considerable reputation as a spa. It possessed the most frightful sulphureous water, which only expert chemists, past-masters in stinks and nauseous flavours, can match; and a big hotel was built near by the spring, to accommodate invalids; who, however, seem to have presently found the healing waters too awful. Like the

famous Lord Derby who suffered from gout, and tasting a special sherry that was recommended to him, remarked that he “preferred the gout,” they rather preferred their ailments than this cure for them. And so the hotel has for the last forty years ceased to be an hotel, and is now a farmhouse—and a very ugly one it is, too.

Dr. Johnson, who was shown Lord Scarsdale’s noble residence of Kedleston Hall, near by, affected not to be impressed by it. He objected to it as “costly but ill-contrived,” and was of opinion that more cost than judgment had gone towards the building. The bedrooms, he justly pointed out, were “small, low, dark, and fitter for a prison than a house of splendour,” and the kitchen was so disposed that the fumes of it were plentifully dispersed over the house, so that you dined sufficiently on the smell in the process of cooking, and were much more than satisfied before you sat at table. Indeed, he thought Kedleston Hall to be nothing better than “a big town-hall.” Robert Adam designed and built it, after the requirements of the age, which delighted in such unhomely homes: and nearly all the great mansions of that period have similar objections: that they are a congeries of mean and awkward rooms, built around a central hall designed to strike neighbours with astonishment and envy. Here the great hall, with its twenty Corinthian columns of pale primrose Elvaston alabaster, is noble enough for an Emperor, but most of the other rooms are mean.

Brailsford, on the way to Ashbourne, still tells in no uncertain way, to those interested in these things, of coaching days. Here still stand the "Rose and Crown," the "Saracen's Head," where the old "Manchester Defiance" changed horses, and a number of farmhouses that were once inns of various grades. And now the scenery grows bold and lovely with thickly wooded hill and dale. Down on the left hand you see a magnificent castellated building of dark limestone, seated in a park where deer are roaming. This is Osmaston Manor, whose grandeur would be calculated to astonish the original Osmund who gave this particular "aston" his name, in far-off Saxon times. It is the seat of Sir Peter Walker, son of Sir A. B. Walker, the first baronet, widely known as the donor of the great Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, where his wealth—his will was proved for three millions sterling—was acquired in the brewing of beer. In the park of Osmaston Manor there roam Chitrali goats and Iceland and Siberian sheep.

The country round about is spangled with another collection of "aston" villages; Ednaston, Ellaston, Ellastone, Hognaston. Muggington is the grotesque name of a place on the right hand of the road.

A long and steep hill leads down into Ashbourne, but the way was steeper and more winding before this road was cut, in coaching days, replacing the hazardous descent of Spital Hill. "Romantic Ashbourne," says Canning;

and there it lies, far below, in the valley of the Dove, so dwarfed by distance and the almost sheer look down upon it that the huddled houses look like some sediment, collected at the bottom of the green vale.

XXX

THE approach to Ashbourne, when you have descended the hill, is not romantic, consisting as it does of the long squalid street of Compton, rich in "lodgings for travellers," *i.e.* tramps; and with the little two-arched bridge, spanning the Henmore stream, lined with men and boys diligently occupied in doing nothing, with great zest and complete content.

The road at the end of Compton, which to all intents and purposes is Ashbourne, takes a puzzling right and left-angle turn; and there you are in the long street of the town, with the market-place, lining the side of a hill, and the "Green Man," at one end, and the church at the other.

The town stands at a junction of roads that was once of considerable importance. Going forward to Manchester, there is a choice of routes; by way of Buxton, or by Leek, and thus the coaching traffic of Ashbourne was considerable.

Canning, in his *Loves of the Triangles*, a sly parody of Dr. Erasmus Darwin's admired *Loves of the Plants*, celebrates Ashbourne and the "Derby Dilly" which ran through it:

So down thy hill, romantic Ashbourne, glides
The Derby Dilly, carrying three insides,

One in each corner sits and lolls at ease,
With folded arms, propt back, and outstretched knees ;
While the press'd Bodkin, pinch'd and squeezed to death,
Sweats in the mid-most place, and scolds, and pants for breath.

Canning, who was a friend of the Boothbys of Ashbourne Hall, probably wrote this there.

The “Derby Dilly” was the current name for the “Diligence,” or light post-coach, that ran in those days between Manchester and Derby, through Ashbourne, and continued to run in this remote district long after railways had elsewhere displaced coaches. To understand the allusions in Canning’s verse, it is necessary to explain that these “diligences” afforded less accommodation than that of an ordinary coach. They carried no outsides, and three insides only, who sat on one seat, facing the horses. The peculiar defects of the “diligence,” from the point of view of the middle passenger, are obvious enough.

It was long thought that railways would never succeed in penetrating into the Peak district, and the “Derby Dilly” maintained its existence until 1858, when the impossible came to pass. Then also the strictly local mail-coach, the Manchester and Derby Mail, was withdrawn; its last journey being on Saturday, October 2nd, 1858.

But, indeed, these sixty miles between Derby and Manchester must needs be of a peculiar interest to the student of traffic and its growth, for it was in this district that the carrying firm of Pickford & Co. had its beginnings, so far back as three hundred years ago. It was some time

early in the seventeenth century that the original firm of pack-horse carriers began, from whose descendants, the Pickfords, by purchase or otherwise, acquired the business, about 1730. From pack-horses, the goods came at last to be carried by waggons, and about 1770 we find Matthew Pickford established at Manchester, with his scope of operations extending to London, to which his "Flying Waggon" travelled in the then unprecedented time of four days and a half; and so the already historic firm continued until 1817, when Joseph Baxendale was admitted to the old firm of Matthew and Thomas Pickford. He soon acquired control of the business and bought out the Pickfords, and although the name has ever since been retained, the firm still remains the property of his descendants.

Great fortunes have been made in the carrying business, and Baxendales, Suttons, and others have, almost unsuspected, amassed amazing wealth; but not every carrier was satisfied with his lot, and one, at least, saw a more excellent way. This was William Bass, who, about the middle of the eighteenth century, was a carrier between Burton-on-Trent, Ashbourne, and Derby. The greater part of his business was done in the carrying of Burton ale for Benjamin Printon, who had, a good many years earlier, begun brewing for the trade. He had started with three men, but the fame of his beer grew, and induced others to set up. Bass, impressed greatly with the increase of his carrying, caused entirely by

the beer trade, planned a way to brew and carry his own beer, and accordingly set up as a brewer at Burton. There is no need to enlarge upon the history of the great firm of Bass & Co., probably now the largest firm of brewers in England, thus founded by William Bass, grandfather of the present head of the firm, Michael Arthur Bass, created Baron Burton in 1886.

William Bass very soon withdrew from the carrying business, which was left to other members of his family and eventually absorbed by the firm of Pickfords, in whose service there remained many years, until his death at an advanced age, a Michael Bass, great-uncle, I believe, of Lord Burton.

Ashbourne, although a town of four thousand inhabitants, is now a very quiet place, and there is little to stir the pulses, except the annual Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday game of football through the streets, between the rival "Uppards" and "Downards" ends. The goals are placed three miles apart at Sturston and Clifton mills, on the Henmore, and there the excited scrimmages in the water, and the consequent duckings, often ending in fights, seem to exhaust all the energies of Ashbourne until the next Shrovetide.

Ashbourne has a good many claims to notice. Among them is that of possessing a Grammar School which has twice, through bad management, been reduced to one scholar. According to Cotton, fellow-angler with Izaak Walton, the town held an invidious distinction in his day, being famed



CHURCH STREET, ASHBOURNE.

C. H. HARPER

for the best malt and notorious for the worst ale in England. Prominent among its features is the church of St. Oswald, “the Pride of the Peak.” It is not near the Peak, but that is immaterial, nor is it, as George Eliot says, “the finest mere parish church in the kingdom”; but it is, at any rate, an exceedingly large and very beautiful building, with a graceful spire rising to a height of 212 feet. Boswell styled it “one of the largest and most luminous churches that I have seen in any town of the same size.” The church was built in the Early English period, as the dedication plate, still existing, proves. There are many very beautiful and interesting monuments here, but none—not even that of Penelope Boothby—more beautiful than the modern stained-glass window erected to one of the Turnbull family. It is a fine piece of varied colouring, notably in the gorgeous blue of the angel’s robe.

The old lords of Ashbourne, the Cokaynes and the Boothbys are represented plentifully in epitaphs and chiselled stone and marble in the north transept. For more than two centuries—from 1372 to 1592—the Cokaynes ruled, and after them came the Boothbys, for two hundred and fifty years. The Cokayne monuments are very fine, although Ruskin will only allow them to be blundering journeyman attempts at imitating Italian workmanship of the same date. They look, however, very grim old knights and dames who thus lie in stark effigy, in rows, the knights

in their chain or plate armour, the dames in their horned or butterfly headdresses, when compared with the effigy of little Penelope Boothby, the only child of the last of the Boothbys of Ashbourne Hall. The epitaph reads

To Penelope
Only child of Sir Brooke Boothby and Dame Susannah Boothby,
Born April 11th, 1785, died March 13th, 1791.
She was in form and intellect most exquisite.
The unfortunate parents ventured their all in this Frail bark,
And the wreck was total.

An inscription beneath runs in English: "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, and the



PENELOPE BOOTHBY'S MONUMENT.

trouble came." This is repeated in Latin, French, and Italian.

The white marble effigy, showing the child lying on a mattress, one of the most simple and yet most beautiful examples of monumental sculpture, is the work of Thomas Banks, R.A., and is perhaps the most celebrated piece of sculp-

ture in England. I do not know why Sir Brooke chose to express his sorrows chiefly in Italian. Long inscriptions in that language appear on the marble, carefully translated in one of the books for which he was responsible :

All our joys are perished with thee alone,
But thou art happy and blessed, my dear
Penelope, who, by one touch of Death, hast
Escaped so many and so great miseries.

Those that descend into the grave are not concealed from Heaven.

Thy locks of pure shining gold, the lightening of thy angelic smile, which used to make a Paradise on earth, are now become only a little senseless dust.

Beauty, this then is thy last asylum !
Her tomb does not yet contain all : it waits for the rest of its prey :—it will not wait long.

But “hearts do not break, they sting and ache,” and Sir Brooke survived for years afterwards.

The love Sir Brooke Boothby bore his little daughter is reflected in many ways. He wrote and printed a considerable volume, *Sorrows Sacred to the Memory of Penelope*; but he was something by way of a literary gent and nursed his grief for the purpose of increasing his output; and even then his tearful cantos made but a few pages, so he filled out the book with other literary exercises. But he did not *sell* his book : he did not do as did our own modern What’s-his-Name, who wrote a poem on the death of his wife and sold it to an editor.

Even more famous than the celebrated monu-

ment to Penelope Boothby is the portrait of her painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1788, and familiar to most people in the engravings after it. The original picture was bought at auction, at the Windus sale of 1859, by the Earl of Dudley, for eleven hundred guineas, and in 1885 it was bought by Mr. Thwaites for no less than £20,000. It was the direct inspiration of Sir John Millais' equally famous "Cherry Ripe," painted as a portrait of the little Miss Ramage, who had gone to a fancy-dress ball in the character of Penelope.

The inspiration of the monument itself has been very marked. The "Sleeping Children" by Chantrey in Lichfield Cathedral is due to Mrs. Robinson, the mother of them, asking Sir Francis Chantrey, whom she had commissioned, to base his work on the monument to Penelope. The sculptor accordingly visited Ashbourne and made a sketch from the work of Thomas Banks.

Lichfield then speedily became the object of the hatred and jealousy of the Ashbourne people, who heard with bitter feelings that the group by Chantrey was even better than the figure they so prided themselves upon. So far back as 1829, a visitor told how "the venerable matron that shows the monument" in Ashbourne church said, in reply to a remark that Chantrey's sculpture was the finer, "Humph! the like of that's what I hear every day. Hang that fellow Chanty, or Carty, or whatever you call him! I wish he had never been born."

Ashbourne Hall, the old home of the Boothbys, is now an hotel. It sheltered Prince Charles in 1745, and in the other bedrooms his chief officers quartered. Their names were chalked at the time upon the doors, and the chalk was afterwards painted over carefully in white paint by some Boothby eager to preserve memories of the historic occasion, but no traces of them are now to be seen.

During the wars with Napoleon, Ashbourne enjoyed a phenomenal prosperity; for, owing largely to its situation in the midst of England, rendering access to the sea rather a long business, the Government made the little town a place where, by 1804, two hundred captured French officers were stationed, on parole. They are said to have spent £30,000 a year in this place. The worst of which they had to complain was their enforced idleness and the obligation to be within bounds at nine o'clock in the evening. They were, in any case, not supposed to go beyond one mile from the town, and if they were late the penalty was a fine of one guinea, to be given to the informer. General Roussambeau was one of the most distinguished of these prisoners. One day he rode far beyond bounds, to Matlock, to meet Lord Macartney and General Boyer. He met them, and with them a humorous person who joked with him at breaking bounds. The Frenchman, incensed at this, promptly sent him a guinea, the informer's fee, on his return to Ashbourne; whereupon, not willing for the Frenchman to have

the last word, the humorist in haste informed the authorities in London, who at once removed Roussambeau to Yaxley, in Huntingdonshire.

But Dr. Johnson is the great figure at Ashbourne. Here he for many years used to visit Dr. Taylor, at the great brick house, still standing, opposite the old Grammar School. It is named simply, and yet arrogantly, “The Mansion.” Tradition tells that the frontage was designed by an Italian architect: probably the dullest dog in his profession, if the solid, stolid, uninspired elevation is the measure of his capabilities. But how beautiful is the garden front, with its two gabled wings and the odd, but distinguished, pavilion between! This unusual feature, containing what is known as the “Octagon Room,” is said to have been built by Dr. Taylor for the purpose of entertaining George the Third.

Dr. Taylor was one of a kind peculiar to the eighteenth century and the first few years of the nineteenth. Low reforming people have so altered the complexion of affairs that his sort are now well-nigh impossible. He was the ideal squarson; with an estate of his own and all manner of pickings from the Church of England, including the rectory of St. Margaret, Westminster, a prebendal stall in the Abbey, and the rectory of Market Bosworth. He was also a Justice of the Peace. He lived in a style befitting these dignities and the emoluments that derived from most of them, and rarely went out without his post-chaise, four horses, and two postilions.

The tie between Taylor and Dr. Johnson was that of early school-friendship and of a continued acquaintance at Oxford, although, to be sure, when they went up to the University, Taylor as a rich man went of course to Christ Church, and Johnson, equally of course, to Pembroke.

One of Taylor's hobbies was that of making cascades in his garden, from the Henmore. The observer of to-day who regards the exiguous trickle of that stream with a doubtful eye is of opinion that it must have been ill striving to make cascades out of it, if the flow were no greater then than now. Another hobby was farming, and Dr. Johnson, in his correspondence with Mrs. Thrale, tells how he kept a great bull whose like, he boasted, was not to be found elsewhere in Derbyshire. He was so proud of his bull that he generally, with considerable pains, managed to lead up to the subject of it at table. One day, however, a man called upon Dr. Taylor, on the subject of hiring a farm, and was shown the famous bull, and to Dr. Taylor's mortification declared he had seen one still larger. He does not seem to have succeeded in hiring that farm, and a year later, Dr. Johnson is found writing to Mrs. Thrale, "We yet hate the man who had seen a bigger bull."

In 1776 Johnson introduced his friend Boswell to Dr. Taylor, and the next year that hero-worshipper was invited, on the instance of Dr. Johnson, to make a longer stay. He remained a fortnight. At his departure for the north he

hired a post-chaise at the still-existing “Green Man” inn, which has absorbed the “Black’s Head” since then and added the name of that extinct house to its own. Boswell describes the landlady of the “Green Man” as a “mighty civil gentlewoman.” Indeed she was! She gave



THE “GREEN MAN AND BLACK’S HEAD,” ASHBOURNE.

him a humble curtsey, and an engraving of her house, upon which she had written: “M. Kilingley’s duty waits upon Mr. Boswell, is exceedingly obliged to him for this favour; whenever he comes this way, hopes for the continuance of the same. Would Mr. Boswell name this house to his extensive acquaintance, it would be a singular

favour conferred on one who has it not in her power to make any other return but her most grateful thanks and sincerest prayers for his happiness in time and in blessed eternity. Tuesday morn.” There does not seem to have been an “Amen” at the end of this, but it is certainly a “felt want.”

The gallows sign of the house boldly straddles the narrow street, with the “Green Man” sign pendant from it, and a huge “Black’s Head,” with glaring eyes and a gaudily painted turban, above.

XXXI

LEAVING Ashbourne, the traveller has still a choice of routes to Manchester. He may go by the bleak and lofty road across the Derbyshire moorlands, with scarce a house for many miles to keep him company, by Newhaven Inn, and in the solemn companionship of the Roman road and the prehistoric tumuli, on to Buxton and by Whaley Bridge to Stockport; or he may choose the way by Leek and Macclesfield to Stockport, which is the old mail-coach route, and therefore pre-eminently *the* Manchester Road. The Buxton route was, however, the earlier of the two, and only fell out of use after 1762, when the road by Leek and Macclesfield was improved and turnpiked. A better surface than that of this route could not be denied, but the stark loneliness of it, its aloofness from most

human interests—it runs as it were along the roof of the world—are rather ghastly. How the isolated inns—the “Jug and Glass,” the “Newhaven Inn,” the “Bull-i’-Thorn,” and the “Old Duke of Cumberland”—pick a living it is difficult to tell.

To go back to still earlier times, neither of these routes formed part of the way between London and Manchester, and a writer of historic novels who sought to give us a true romance of this road in, say, the seventeenth century, would need to set his horsemen, who were then your only travellers, jogging along from Manchester to London by way of the roundabout route of Warrington, Great Budworth, Cranage Heath, Holmes Chapel, Brereton, Church Lawton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, whence they would generally proceed by Stone, Lichfield, and Coleshill. That was, with minor divagations suggested by taste and fancy, or by such circumstances as floods or highwaymen, the old original post-road.

The river Dove is crossed at Hanging Bridge, or Mayfield Bridge, where rival inns, one on either side of the water, glower at one another and divide the custom of the contemplative angler and the strenuous pilgrims of the road. It is “Hanging Bridge” because of the legendary execution of rebels here.

The annals of Hanging Bridge are varied by an incident of the 'Forty-five, not yet entirely forgotten, when the innkeeper, in defence of his cellar, was wounded by one of the Highlanders.

It is not so long since the countryfolk ceased talking familiarly of that time ; of the farmer who was shot dead by two rebels, to whom he had refused to give up his horse ; and of the dreadful fate that befel those stragglers who from one cause or another fell from the ranks of Prince Charlie's retreating army. I picture the gaunt, ragged Highlander, fallen by the wayside, a stranger in a strange land, understanding nothing



HANGING BRIDGE.

of English ; and I see the murderous peasantry, revenging themselves upon him for their late terrors, by stringing him up to the nearest tree. Legends tell how these derelicts of the invading army were hanged from signposts, but we may easily disprove that much, for there were not any signposts in 1745. The simple villagers used the trees instead. A horrid story is indeed told of one of the pottery towns, by which it appears that the body of one of these unfortunate clansmen was flayed, and a drum made of his skin.

The last incident that is at all worth recording

here is that of 1819, when Manchester was thirsty for political reform, and thousands of its people incidentally hungering for bread. A march on London was proposed by the "Blanketeers" after the broken-up meeting of "Peterloo," but extremely hot weather and other discouragements were in their way. Despite opposition, however, five hundred reached Macclesfield, but there they were dispersed by the military, and only one reached Ashbourne. As a threatening demonstration he was not a success.

At Mayfield lived none other than Tommy Moore, nearly four years, between 1813 and 1817, and here, inspired by the sweet-toned chimes of Ashbourne, he wrote the familiar verses, *Those Evening Bells*:

Those evening bells ! Those evening bells !
 How many a tale their music tells
 Of youth and home, and that sweet time
 When last I heard their soothing chime !

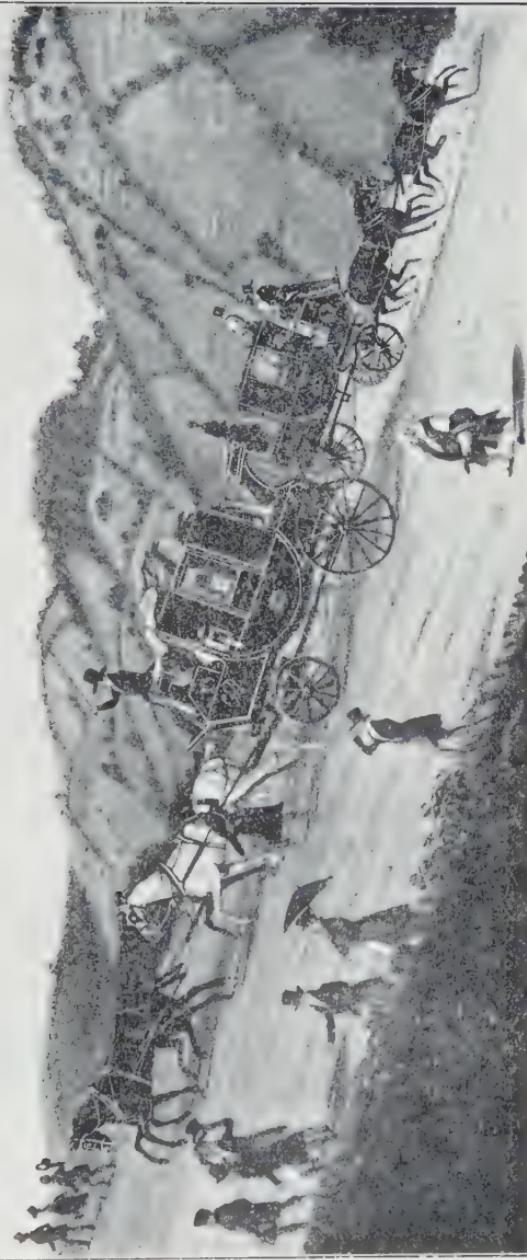
Those joyous hours are passed away,
 And many a heart that then was gay
 Within the tomb now darkly dwells,
 And hears no more those evening bells.

And so 'twill be when I am gone ;
 That tuneful peal will still ring on ;
 While other bards shall walk these dells,
 And sing your praise, sweet evening bells.

At Mayfield Cottage, in midst of typical English scenery, and with the meadows and the cows coming up to his very door, he wrote that work of supercharged Orientalism, *Lalla Rookh*;

[After J. D. Lind.

THE MANCHESTER MAILS PASSING ONE ANOTHER NEAR ASHBOURNE.



and here he first tasted the delights of literary success. Byron had set the fashion in literature and made Eastern subjects pay, and Moore accordingly proposed to take advantage of the prevailing taste and write a poem of giaours, houris, peris, and bul-buls. He knew nothing of Oriental subjects, but that mattered little. Purchasing every available book on the East, he retired to this spot, and, after three years' studying the library thus acquired, produced that highly successful work. There were great men in those days, but perhaps Longmans were the greatest among them. They agreed to give Moore £3,000 for *Lalla Rookh* before ever a line of it was written. O! my Anointed Aunt, three thousand of the best, three thousand golden minted quid for so problematical a result.

Here, across Hanging Bridge, the road has left Derbyshire and entered Staffordshire. It goes up a long, long, staggering hill out of the valley of the Dove and comes to some very grim uplands, where the fields have stone walls instead of hedges, and moors presently take the place of fields. The situation is extremely exposed ; hence perhaps the name of the neighbouring village of Blore, *i.e.* a blowy, windy place. Swinseoe, or Swinecote, as it is more properly styled, *i.e.* "Swine's house," is a lonely hamlet with a background of dense plantations crowning two forbidding hills. Calton Moor succeeds to it, with a farmhouse at the cross-roads, once the Calton Moor Inn, and the scenery now grows wildly beautiful ; the road at

last descending with alarming steepness to Waterhouses, with a dangerous level crossing of quarry, or other, works at the bottom. Here the river Hamps sings along the valley, on its way to join the river Manifold, disappearing underground, among the limestone rocks, for some miles : the neighbouring village of Waterfall taking its name from this phenomenon. Waterhouses was in the



SWINSCOE.

coaching days nothing more than its name implies : a few scattered houses, chiefly inns, where the coaches changed horses, built in modern times beside the river Hamps, bordering the road. Nowadays it has grown considerably, and since the recent opening of the Leek and Manifold Valley Railway, with a Waterhouses station, it has grown very popular with trippers to the wonderful scenery of the neighbourhood. There are lime-

stone rocks, picturesque cliffs, and ancient bridges along the valley of the Manifold, and a cavern dedicated by the superstitious Saxons to their deity, Thor.

At Winkhill Bridge, down the road, we had bid good-bye to the Hamps, and then came on a hill-top to what used to be known, perversely enough, as "Bottom" inn, now called the "Green Man." The green man himself, in the guise of



WATERHOUSES.

an archer, appears on the sign. Cross-roads go off, left to Cheadle, famed in Limerick-lore for a young lady, a needle, and a beadle, and right to Hartington, passing on the way the hamlet of Onecote, whose name gives a fine opening for cheap wits.

It is now chiefly downhill to the town of Leek, the "metropolis of the moorlands," as it has been called, but a metropolis only in a very restricted sense, for its inhabitants number only about 15,000. The sombre, rocky moors of this wildest

corner of Staffordshire surround it, and indeed have given the place its name, which comes from the Cymric "llech": a rock. A tall, mouldering cross in the churchyard of the old parish church, covered with ancient Celtic devices, bears witness to the immemorial antiquity of the settlement.

Leek, however, is a surprise to most travellers



BOTTOM INN: THE "GREEN MAN."

from the south; being a forerunner, a preliminary specimen in Staffordshire, of the typical Lancashire manufacturing town. Cobbles and setts and clogs, with factories and tall chimney-stacks, are its chiefest features, and the spinning of silk thread its principal business. The public in general know nothing of Leek, but it was discovered not many months ago by a Radical newspaper on the look-out for a sensation. It may be taken as a certain, sure thing that when a newspaper in

these times wants a sensation, it is bound to have it, and this is how it was served up :

THE LABEL-LICKERS

How the Child Workers in
Factories Earn a
Pittance

MACHINES TOO SLOW

But why not use the thing for all it was alliteratively worth, "The Little Label Lickers of Leek."

It was not much of a sensation, after all : resolving itself simply into the facts that among the hundreds of girls employed in the silk-thread factories there are many whose business is to pack and label the reels. They are paid a wage that is, it is true, almost incredibly small : one "full-timer" earning, by this account, only 2s. 9d. in five days, but others up to 10s. Among them there are many who refuse to use the mechanical dampers ready to hand, preferring, for sake of extra speed, to lick the labels. This is done with a speed bewildering to any one who has not himself licked and stuck labels for a living. One girl boxed-up twenty-five gross of reels and licked and stuck a like number of labels in a working day of nine hours and a half. It will be observed that no one was obliged to deal with the labels in this way, and that in some factories the use of a damper was even compulsory ; but look at the "scare" headlines to be got !

In common with all other towns that witnessed the march of the Highlanders, and their subsequent retreat, in 1745, Leek long cherished memories of that time. It was an era from which everything else was dated. It was also an era in which the keeping of diaries was the resort of contemplative people, whose observations, en-



LEEK.

tertaining in themselves, are additionally amusing by reason of the diarists' quaint notions of grammar and spelling. Thus, Squire Mountford, of "the Grange," is found remarking upon Prince Charlie's forces as composed of "some very fine men and good horses, but the greater part was such poor, shabby, lousy, diminutive creatures as never seen in England—one half of 'em without breeches; some rid without saddles and halters . . . they were expecting the duck's army would be with

them.” By “the duck” we are to understand the Duke of Cumberland, who, sure enough, *was* with them, later on.

Mountford’s remark as to the Highlanders being without breeches is especially amusing. He had obviously never before seen, or heard of, kilts, and appears to think they went without breeches because they were too poor to afford them. He was not alone in this view of the “petticoat men,” as the people styled them.

In the church of St. Edward is the singular memorial of William Trafford of Swithamley, who died in 1697, aged ninety-three, and is the hero of a legend pictured on the sign of the “Old Rock House” Inn at Barton, near Manchester. Rudely sculptured on the tomb is the figure of a man threshing corn, with the words “Now thus,” alluding to the only words he would utter when, many years earlier, during the Civil War, the Roundhead soldiery burst into his house and found the place empty except for himself, whom they discovered in the barn, monotonously repeating those meaningless words. They thought him a “poor natural,” and so departed, but he was not quite the fool he seemed, for beneath the threshing-floor he had hidden most of his valuables.

XXXII

THE road leaves Leek again downhill, descending to the river Churnet, with the long expanse of Rudyard Lake stretching for two miles on the

left hand. This was cut as a reservoir for feeding the Trent and Mersey, and Leek and Cauldon Canals ; but has long been, in addition, a holiday-resort and picnic-place, where boating and yachting are to be had, with plenty of elbow-room for any likely number of the excursionists brought to Rudyard station by the North Staffordshire Railway. Rudyard is, in consequence of all these things, a village where every cottage provides teas and refreshments. The most notable of them is the house called Spite Hall, at the north end of the lake. The legendary lore of the place tells how this was originally built by some malevolent person, to "spite" the owner of Rudyard Villa, standing immediately behind it, with the object of obliterating the view ; which it certainly very effectively does, the only view that Rudyard Villa now enjoys being the back wall of Spite Hall, at the distance of a few feet. But this is a picturesque way of putting the simple fact that the owner of the land, by exercising his right of building, incidentally disestablished a cherished view. There was not, necessarily, any spite in it. But this is the stuff that legends are made of.

Rushton Marsh stands where Rudyard Lake ends, on a rivulet falling presently into the river Dane. On the hill above, coyly hiding behind some farmyards and cowsheds, and up along muddy tracks that it is a sorrow to trace, stands the little church of Rushton Spencer, with a turret which suggests its having been designed by an architect of packing-cases. A closely

ranked number of very grim tombstones fill the ill-kept churchyard, among them one with this inscription :

“ Thomas, son of Thomas and Mary Meaykin, interred July 16, 1781, aged 21 years. As a man falleth before wicked men, so fell I. *Bia θανατος*” (= put to death by force).

The tragedy referred to was that of a youth who presumed to love the daughter of his master, who caused him to be drugged and then buried. This happened at Stone, some twenty miles away. The unfortunate young man’s relatives disinterred the body, which they found in a position clearly indicating that he had been buried alive, and conveyed it hither.

Staffordshire is exchanged for Cheshire at the passage of the river Dane, in another mile and a half. The not remarkable village of Bosley follows, with Bosley Reservoir on the right, and on the left the bold hills of Raven’s Clough. And then the fine, broad road goes down in a magnificent, steady way, by a succession of little wooded hills, into Macclesfield.

There are elements of beauty in and around the old town of Macclesfield, but they are sorely mingled with the results of a hundred and fifty years of factory life. It was in 1756 that silk spinning and weaving were introduced here, speedily overshadowing by their importance the old button-making trade of the town; and although silk has had its ups and downs, and has of late years been severely stricken by foreign

competition, there is a look of prosperity in the enormous mills that meet the eye at every turn, and are not infrequently extending their operations.

The old original Macclesfield stands high above the sites of these many factories, and centres about the ancient parish church of St. Michael, upon its rock, the successor of a very early church of the same dedication, which indeed furnished Macclesfield with its original name of "Michael's Field," whence, by way of "Maxfield" we obtain the present style. The dedication seems, however, to have been changed at some period unknown, to All Hallows, and was so in the sixteenth century: reverting later to the present style.

Steep streets lead up to that hub and core of the town where the church stands, and more steeply still climbs the footway up the one hundred and eight stairs of Brunswick Steps. The view, looking aloft to the church, must once have been particularly fine, but it was long since spoiled by the squalid houses built on the hillside; the very last note of the commonplace being touched in the recently rebuilt "Nag's Head" public-house, full in the view, where not merely the photographer, but even the artist, must deal with it.

St. Michael's Church, a grand building beautifully restored, has had varied fortunes. It was damaged when the Parliamentary army besieged and took the town, and was later very largely rebuilt on a semi-pagan "classic" model. The

great ornamental iron gates enclosing the stone-flagged churchyard are relics of this period, and incidentally disclose the ironworkers' ideas of what angels are like: a gilded figure over the principal gate representing a very saucy-looking young woman ecstatically pirouetting on one foot, a kind of celestial can-can, and flourishing a big trumpet.

Time has not yet obliterated the epitaph in the churchyard upon one Mary Broomfield, who died in 1755, aged eighty; and it is still possible to read how "The chief concern of her life for the last 20 years was to order and provide for her funeral. Her greatest pleasure was to think and talk about it. She lived many years on a pension of 9d. a week, and yet saved £5, which at her own request was laid out at her burial." A day with Mary Broomfield when in her most characteristic mood must have been a real treat: the conversation doubtless resolving itself into a discussion of the suitability or otherwise of fringes on shrouds and the respective merits of copper or brass coffin-plates.

The work of bringing back the old church to something of its ancient state was costly, but the result is striking. There is a very wealth of monuments, many of the Savages, a Cheshire family of great note in their day, lying in effigy in the Savage Chapel and in the Chantry also associated with them: most notable among them all the loving figures of Sir John Savage, 1495, and his wife, Katharine Stanley. These lie side

by side; the knight's right hand clasping her left. It would have been better had the alabaster figures not been blackleaded by some old-time caretaker!

The Leghs, of Lyme and Adlington, vie in the interest of their monuments with the Savages. Of foremost interest is the inscription to "Perkin a Legh":

Here lyeth the bodie of Perkin a Legh
That for King Richard the death did die,
Betrayed for Righteovsnes 1399,
And the bones of Sir Peers his sonne,
That with King Henrie the Fift did wonne
In Paris.

This Perkin served King Edward the Third and the Black Prince his sonne in all their warres in France, and was at the Battell of Cressie and hadd Lyme given him for that service. And after their deaths served King Richard the Second, and left him not in his troubles, but was taken with him and beheaded at Chester by King Henrie the Fourth. And the sayd Sir Peers his sonne served King Henrie the Fift and was slain at the Battell of Agincourt 1415.

Here, then, lie the Leghs of that old time, with a lying epitaph over them; for it was not Perkin a Legh, but his father-in-law, Sir Thomas D'Angers, whose monument is at Grappenhall, who was given Lyme for his loyal devoirs at Creecy. Whether the misstatement was on the original inscription, or was inserted by Sir Peter Legh, who in 1620 "restored" it, does not appear.

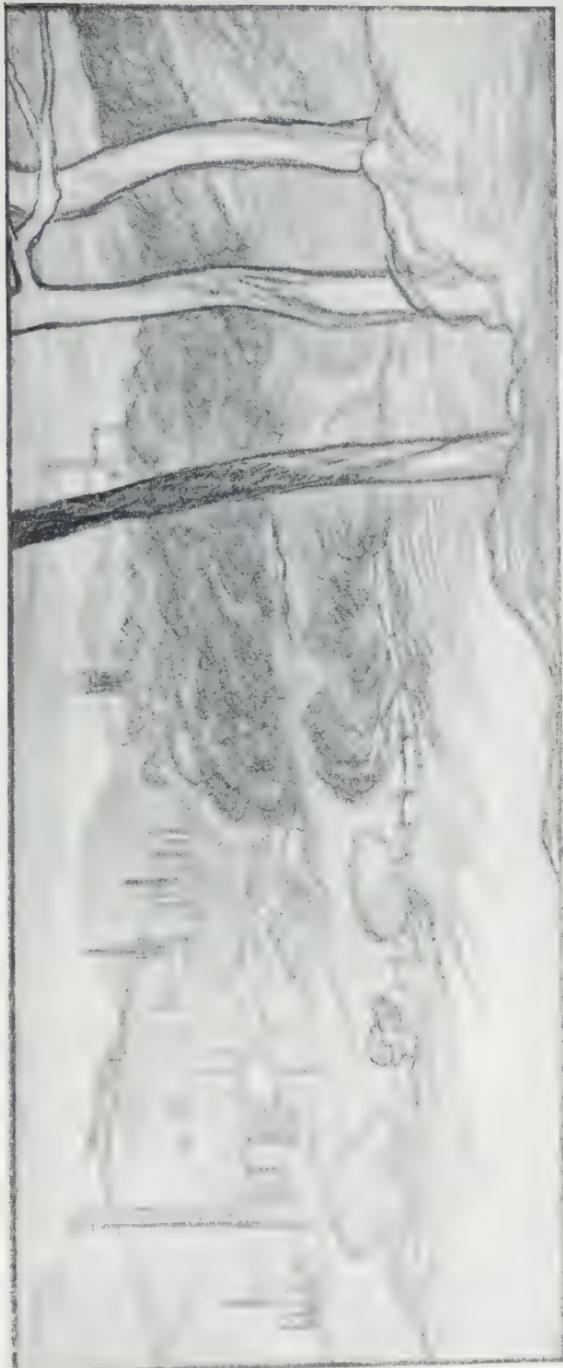
There is something of everything in Macclesfield, and while much of the old order of things prevails, and while barbaric granite setts pave almost every street, above or below, there are modern evidences, in the shape of Public Libraries,

Technical Institutes, and drinking fountains. Time was when your only drinking fountain was a tankard in one of the inns, and when the silk-mills themselves were the sole technical schools : and yet in those times Macclesfield still contrived to become great. That period of growing greatness, when the factory system first brought wealth to the Roes, the Brocklehursts, and other foremost silk-weavers, is reflected in the long rows of very urban, rather grim, houses as you enter the town from the direction of Leek, and in the great box-like brick front of the old “Macclesfield Hotel” of pre-railway days ; and the present period of full-blown prosperity is marked by the public parks and museums. The town is always bustling, but to see it at its busiest—when it is strenuously engaged in the business of making holiday—you must come here either on the 22nd of June, or at Michaelmas. On the first occasion is held “the Barnaby,” *i.e.* the St. Barnabas Fair, and on the second, “the Wakes”; both crowded pleasure fairs. Still, as in old testimony, the genuine townsfolk reckon time and events, past or future, as so long “since last, or come next Barnaby,” or Wakes, as the case may be. The former is the favourite, and thus becomes associated with the circumstances of life, whether of joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, in a family. The aged couple count the length of their wedded life by “the Barnaby”; the mother tells you the age of her children by “the Barnaby”; the simple annals of operative existence

measure the periods of working prosperity, or the privations of short time, by “the Barnaby.”

Macclesfield presents a very striking view from the road on to Manchester. No sooner are the last houses of the town left behind than the highway plunges into a beautiful avenue. From it you look out upon that “field,” folded in between the great hills, in which the town is situated. There the church of St. Michael, on its eyrie, seems in the distance to be set about with woods ; while down below is the church at Park Green, neighboured by chimney-stacks and gasometers : manufactories set in the lap of scenic beauty.

A little distance onward there stood in coaching days the tollhouse of Flash ; not to be confused with that of Flash Bar at Axe Edge, near Buxton. The inns of this neighbourhood were notorious in the late years of the eighteenth century and the opening days of the nineteenth as haunts of the unlicensed pedlars who obtained their stock in the town of Macclesfield and tramped the country, selling buttons, laces, and other trifles, and committing robberies when opportunity offered. They were gregarious folk, fond of the company of their kind, and held at their favoured houses of call veritable rogues’ saturnalia. From this spot and from Flash Bar, up in the hills, greatly frequented by them, are said to have arisen the expressions of “flash talk” and “flashy” articles : in allusion to their vagabonds’ slang and the cheap but showy goods they offered. But however that



MACCLESFIELD, FROM THE ROAD TO STOCKPORT.

may be, the old place-name “Flash” merely describes the natural surroundings of the spot, and is but a phonetic variant of “plash”; whence with the addition of an initial “s” we get “splash.” We have an early authority for this; the *Promptorium Parvulorum* of 1440 giving “Plasche or flasche, where reyne water stondyth.”



PRESTBURY.

Flash stands in just such a situation, below the hills, by the river Bollin.

Bollington, on the right hand, a new town of cotton-mills and silk-factories, with very bold scenery around it, dyes the waters of the stream, which run red or yellow, blue or green, according to the colours at the moment in use.

Prestbury, one of the prettiest and most interesting villages in Cheshire, lies hidden to the left hand of the road. It is a place of much scenic and antiquarian note, for there stands the

very reverend enriched Norman doorway of a church older even than the present, built into the wall of the schoolhouse, itself acquiring antiquity, seeing that it was built in 1626. The doorway, placed here in 1747, is mouldering away, but shows abundant traces of an unusual wealth of sculpture. Here, too, is the "Old Vicarage," a three-storeyed black-and-white building, five hundred years old, and along the street, the quaint "Black Boy" inn. In the churchyard are the remains of a Saxon cross, carefully framed in glass, while queer epitaphs, like that upon Bennison, an old huntsman at Adlington, shock the solemnity of the spot:

The joys of his heart were good hounds and good nappy,
Oh ! with him for ever still more and more happy.

The second line sadly wants a gloss to clarify its obscurity, but reads as though it was expected he would find equally good hounds and yet more excellent ale in Kingdom Come.

The epitaph on Edward Green reads like a primitive and clumsy attempt at constructing a Limerick :

Beneath this stone lyes Edw'd Green
Who for cutting stone famous was seen,
But he was sent to apprehend
One Joseph Clark of Kerridge End
For stealing deer of Esquire Downs,
Where he was shott and dyd o' th' wounds.

The reading of this uneven verse is like the jolting of a rough road. It is lengthy for a Limerick, and does not end in a workmanlike

manner. It might therefore be made to conclude with

A result he could not have foreseen.

XXXIII

PAST the old “Butley Ash” inn we come to Milne House, an ancient stone and half-timbered farmhouse of considerable distinction, standing by the roadside. It was once the “dower-house” of the Leghs of Adlington Hall: the place of banishment to which the ancient widowed ladies of the Hall were retired when their sons married and their rule was done. The provision of a “dower-house” was an old English recognition of the hoary provision of nature, that mothers-in-law and children-in-law cannot agree: hence the dowager was provided always with a home of her own, to which she was relegated when she was superseded as mistress of the Hall. I could easily find a tear and a sigh for the dowager, but it must be remembered that she had once been a young bride and had in her own time disestablished the ancient lady of the Hall. “With whatsoever measure ye mete, it shall be meted to you again.” So away with sentiment!

Presently, at a turning to the left, past the “Adlington Arms,” a post-office, three or four cottages, and another inn, the gates of Adlington Park are seen, very carefully locked, and hiding from unauthorised wayfarers the approach to the Hall.

There have been Leghs at Adlington for six

centuries and Leghs remain there yet. The Cheshire families of Legh are numerous enough to form a clan, and historic enough for a very long antiquarian discussion, if this were the place for it. They were renowned in the field of battle and in the bower of love, and indeed one of the Leghs of Adlington is the hero of the ancient ballad, *The Spanish Lady's Love*. This was Sir Urien Legh, who shared the tented field in company with the Earl of Essex at the siege of Cadiz, and captured a young, beautiful, and wealthy Spanish lady, who fell violently in love with him, as the passionate old ballad declares. But Sir Urien, unfortunately, was a married man, and the song woefully concludes with the lady's determination to enter a convent.

It was Sir Thomas, father of this captivating knight, who built the most striking portion of the timbered Hall. He was proud of his work, it seems, for it is duly set forth on a tablet over the entrance how in 1581 he, "Thomas Legge and Sibbell, daughter of Sir Urien Brereton of hondforde," were responsible for it. Equally proud of their own doings were Charles and Hester Legh, who in 1757 added the great brick wing with classic pillared front, in the taste of that age: very fine, but utterly out of keeping with the Elizabethan work. The Leghs honoured themselves by entertaining Handel, who stayed at Milne House and played upon the organ still in the Hall. The legend of the "Harmonious Blacksmith" being composed by him at Whit-

church, near London, is familiar to most people, and circumstantial accounts are given, connecting the incident with that place: clinched by the sculptured tombstone in the churchyard to the original blacksmith, William Powell, who died in 1721. The association with Whitchurch is so generally accepted that Powell's anvil, which rang out the suggestive notes, was in recent times sold at auction for a considerable sum. But Adlington also stoutly claims to be the place where the famous melody was written, and Hollingworth smithy the spot that suggested it. The verdict of the court is, however, with Whitchurch. A variant upon these stories is the assertion that the melody of the "Harmonious Blacksmith" is really an arrangement of an old French air. Musicians characterise the ringing anvil origin of the air as absurd.

Passing Hope Green, the road becomes paved as to half of its width with granite setts, and then approaches Poynton, a cheerful village of modern red-brick country cottages with pleasant gardens and the "Vernon Arms" inn, displaying a heraldic sign boldly declaring *Vernon semper viret*—"Vernon always flourishes." A railway bridge, spanning the road at the end of the village, brings us to Hazel Grove, situated where the highway to Chapel-en-le-Frith and Buxton goes off.

Here the country ends suddenly, as though it were shorn off in a clean cut. Looking backwards, through the railway bridge, there is

the sunny road ; in front, in the direction of Manchester, is the greyer atmosphere of town. One might easily imagine that bridge to be the veritable doorway into Manchester and its congeries of satellite towns ; or, coming from Manchester, the entrance into the region of rural things. There, through the archway, is Poynton, as yet rustic, with birds singing on the hedgerow spray : here the costermonger is crying his wares, and you encounter the terminus of a series of electric tramways that lead with little intermission as far as Bolton. And in between there is an ever-deepening gloom, a continuously increasing racket of traffic on the terrible granite setts that Manchester affects ; a growing throng of anxiously hurrying people, units in that wonderful, and to some minds no less terrible than wonderful, assemblage of four millions of human beings who inhabit these next few miles.

The name of Hazel Grove is as poetic as that of the village of “Falling Water” Rip Van Winkle knew before he went off in his long twenty years’ sleep. When he awoke, you will remember, he found it become a very different place, and renamed “Washington.” But the reverse process has taken place here. In the old days this was merely “Bullock Smithy,” into which you cannot read poetry, epic or pastoral. Bullock Smithy was just a wayside forge which is said to have taken its name from the cattle-drovers bringing their steers to be shod here, on the long journey down the road. They may have done, and

probably did so; but the name really originated in 1560, when the smithy, even then existing, was bequeathed to the smith, Richard Bullock, of Torkington, by "John de Torkinton."

The place by degrees became a little settlement of residences built by Manchester men who loved the country, and some of these country houses may even yet be seen in the long street, looking



THE "VILLAGE OF HAZEL GROVE."

very much out of place amid their new neighbours: notably a large stuccoed house with a tablet bearing the date 1761, and the initials H. J. M. "Bullock Smithy" then no longer served. The name was too redolent of cattle-drovers, and so "Hazel Grove" was invented. On the front of the great white-faced "Red Lion" inn may be seen carved the legend, "Village of Hazel Grove, 1796," but this does not appear to have been cut until 1836, and the old road-books go on

calling the place by its older name until coaching and Cary were both snuffed out.

Some pathetic relics of a bygone day still remain, chiefly in' the names of houses and side-streets. But "Cherry Tree Lane" nowadays contains no cherry-trees, and no Jargonels or Bons Chrétiens grow in the garden of "Pear Tree Cottage."

But still, for a little way ahead, it is only the main road that is so urban. Open fields, a little sickly, it is true, extend on either side, behind the fringe of houses ; and away to the left, nearly two miles off, Bramhall Hall, one of the finest of the ancient timbered halls of Cheshire, may be found.

It is interesting, with an interest almost pathetic, to journey on to Manchester and to notice how the urban undertone of the road grows to be the dominant note : how the wayside fringe of bricks and mortar widens and the meadows give place first to brickfields and finally to grey streets. You pass from place to place and think them all one : from Hazel Grove to Heaviley, and thence to Stockport, Heaton Norris, Heaton Chapel, Levenshulme, Grindley Marsh, Longsight, and Ardwick Green, finally coming into Manchester by the infernal din of the thronging traffic at London Road railway station.

I am a southerner. It has been borne in upon me, on this progression to Scotland, that I am journeying to what is, to all intents and purposes, a foreign land ; and on the way to that country

across the Border I encounter a growing strangeness. Leicester is the ultimate place on this road wherein the Londoner finds himself on equal terms with the inhabitants. At Derby he notices a slight change; but on approaching Manchester, he finds himself on the threshold of another order of things. He notices a suppressed energy in even the least active, and an abundant vitality everywhere; and he finds a strange accent and strange new expressions. For example, even on the land-agents' notice-boards, here, on the outskirts of Manchester, there will be seen a something incomprehensible to the stranger from the south: as thus "This Land to be Let, or Sold on Chief." This strange term, "on Chief," which looks like a variant of "Freehold," is really a species of ground-rent: the landowner "selling" his land, yet with the odd reservation of a perpetual "Chief Rent"; by which if he does not precisely achieve the impossible feat usually described as "Eating your cake and having it too," he certainly does seem to approach that marvel.

The suburban road is here sufficiently broad, and approaching Stockport, where the fine modern church of St. George looks along the vista with its great bulk and graceful spire, it is even imposing, but the prevalent grey atmosphere dims and flattens everything; obscuring details, like an impressionist painter. The great church of St. George, in the newly formed parish of that name, was built in 1897, at the enormous cost of £90,000; borne entirely by one person. With

a rather touching, but misplaced, confidence it is surrounded by trim lawns, and an almost rural-looking vicarage rises close by ; but the stone-work of the church shows signs of turning black, the earth is growing dank and stale, and the lawns are by degrees going bald.

Stockport, in its local patriotism, would probably resent being lumped with "Manchester," and Manchester itself might object, but to the passer-by, ignorant of local divisions, it is all one with the great city, although the town is not even in the same county with it ; the river Mersey here dividing Stockport in Cheshire, from Manchester in Lancashire. Cheshire, in its most characteristic condition, is the Cheshire of the cheese-farms in the great fertile plain, where mild-eyed cows stand knee-deep in pastures ; and a great manufacturing town is entirely out of sympathy with such idyllic scenes. I give you my word there are no idylls in Stockport : only a road where the granite setts are greasy ; the pavements thronged with busy people and the girls of the cotton-mills ; the sky smoky, and the air filled with distracting noise. But to see a less crowded and less noisy Stockport would be a sorry thing, for it is the wealth-producing commerce of the place that makes it what it is, and the times when the railway-lorries cease to crash and rumble along the streets, and when the waggons, laden with mountainous heights of grey shirtings, are no longer seen on their way from the cotton-mills to Manchester warehouse, will be troublous times

for not only mill-hand and manufacturer, but for every one.

Commerce is typified in the statues that decorate public buildings by a woman of noble proportions, clothed in classic dress, and in her face a majestic calm ; but that is an abstraction. Commerce as understood here—and indeed everywhere—is a matter of telegrams and telephones, of bales, packing-cases, and feverish hurry ; and I suppose—if you must feminise—the nearest real human beings to that classic convention are the mill-girls and the typists. For the rest, commerce is what you perceive here ; a polluted river, darkened by factories, bridges, and railway viaducts ; and great goods yards, advertisement hoardings, banks, and the hundred-and-one kinds of buildings in which the business of the twentieth century is carried on.

The tall railway viaduct that spans the Mersey and goes high over the steep and grimy streets leading down to it, is impressive in its very bulk and in the smoky atmosphere that reveals it only in a broad flat effect ; and, in the same way, the towering buildings that have no beauty of detail, gloom down upon you with an ogreish aspect that transcends their ugliness and elevates it into the region of horrific romance.

That such a place can ever have been the site of a castle wherein dwelt the glittering creatures of chivalry is scarce thinkable : and yet there was such a stronghold. But the very ruins of it were cleared away so long ago as 1775.

They were very scanty, and no sort of use to Prince Charles, when he passed here, going and returning in the '45. His Highlanders, we learn from one of the diarists of that time, "were very rough as they went through Stockport, and took



OLD TOWN HOUSE OF THE ARDERNES, STOCKPORT.

Mr. Elcock and 2 or 3 more with 'em, with Halters about their necks."

Those good old times again, when England was Merry England. What fun!

But these good Stockport people were not strung up, after all, and returned later in the day to the bosom of their families.

A relic of an older Stockport that knew nothing of cotton-mills or other factories is to be found in the street called Great Underbank. This is the old timbered town house of the Ardernes of Harden and Tarporley. This ancient family resorted hither in the long ago from their various country seats, and called it "coming to town." The Manchester and Liverpool District Bank now occupies the fine old place.

The "White Lion" was an interesting old inn, but it has gone down before Stockport's growing commercial greatness. It was the house, according to usually received accounts, where the following tribute to the management was to be seen, inscribed on a window-pane by some dissatisfied guest of nearly a century and a half ago :

If traveller, good treatment be thy care,
A comfortable bed, and wholesome fare,
A Modest bill, and a diverting host,
Neat maid, and ready waiter,—quit this coast.
If dirty doings please, at Stockport lie ;
The girls, O frowzy frights, here with their mothers vie.

I think this is all the historian who is merely a gossip can say about Stockport. But stay ! One very prominent feature has been passed over, and as I have no wish to incur the wrath of the burgesses, I hasten to repair the omission. Stockport is intensely proud of possessing the largest Sunday School in the world : proud, that is to say, of the large roll-call of its scholars, and possibly also of the mere bulk of the great building. Of its appearance, which is that of any large

factory, there could not possibly be any pride. But in these days of secular advances and of a growing godless Socialism in great industrial centres, it is at once surprising and hopeful to see the like of Stockport's great Sunday School : and in Manchester itself to witness the really wonderful Whitsuntide sight of the Sunday Schools' processions through the chief streets of the great city.

END OF VOL. I

